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NOTICE.

The Translator thinks it necessary to state that he was induced to undertake the task not from any confidence or concurrence in the Author's political or religious views, but because the work has made a considerable sensation abroad, and may afford some useful warnings, if not lessons, to ourselves at home.

PARIS AFTER WATERLOO

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THE

POLITICAL FUTURE

OF

ENGLAND.

BY THE COMTE DE MONTALEMBERT,

OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY.

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FROM THE FRENCH.

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CONTENTS.

Sect.		Page
I.	What is to become of England?	1
II.	Of what misleads People's judgment about England	22
III.	The Two Democracies	31
IV.	Of Democracy in England	39
V.	The Grounds of better Hope	53
VI.	What of Aristocracy remains in England ..	59
VII.	On the Law of Entails	99
VIII.	Parliamentary Reform	116
IX.	The Parliament	121
X.	The Schools and the Universities	139
XI.	Catholicism in England	165
XII.	Anglicanism	191
XIII.	The Efforts of English Society against the Danger	205
XIV.	Will England democratized remain free? ..	213
XV.	Qualities which may guarantee to England her Liberty, independently of her Aristocracy	226
XVI.	Publicity in England	245
XVII.	England and Spain	258
XVIII.	Conclusion	263

THE

POLITICAL FUTURE OF ENGLAND.

SECTION I.

WHAT IS TO BECOME OF ENGLAND?

THIS is a question very generally asked on the Continent, and which even in England cannot but agitate many a heart. But apart from either the speculations of rivalry or the apprehensions of patriotism, there is a third class of observers with whom the question is of still higher and more universal interest. With every one (too few, alas! in number) who still professes any respect for the liberties of mankind and the dignity of human nature, there cannot be a subject of more anxious, more vital solicitude, than the future fate of England, hitherto the greatest example and guarantee of both.

We cannot conceal from ourselves that

there prevails at this moment in the world a general opinion unfavourable to the security of this great nation, to the duration of her glorious institutions, and even to the soundness of her political morality. The unbounded confidence, the legitimate envy, the passionate admiration which she had inspired for more than a century to all enlightened and generous minds, have imperceptibly made room for very different sentiments. While the ancient and faithful partisans of England, and of all that she represents in the world, seem less at their ease, her inveterate adversaries, increased and encouraged by the accidents of the times, are announcing her decline and anticipating her fall. In this point, as indeed everywhere else, the partisans of despotism and the zealots of democracy have a secret and instinctive alliance; they concur in the same wishes, and would applaud the same catastrophe. Neither can forgive England for having been so long an insurmountable bulwark against both these extremes. Her monarchy, powerful and limited, has been too practical a contradiction to the false

logic, the false theories, and the passionate ambition of the Absolutists. Her ever-increasing strength, her unbounded and unabused liberty, and her unchecked and unrivalled prosperity, supply the most conclusive arguments, as well as the most effectual resistance, to the savage equality of Socialism on the one hand, and on the other to that clumsy Despotism which has no other expedient for preserving a people from anarchy and terror than the depriving them of their liberties and their rights. Both these parties unite in envying her the glory of offering to surrounding nations her example as a refuge against either of their shameful alternatives.

Since the failure of the ultra-liberal or revolutionary experiments on the Continent, England stands alone in the world as an example of rational Liberty, and is the object of the secret envy of all its enemies. "When," they say to themselves, "when shall the world get rid of this nightmare? Who will deliver us from this nest of obstinate aristocrats and of hypocritical reformers? When shall we

break down the pride of this obstinate people, who, defying the laws of revolutionary logic, have the audacity to believe at once in tradition and in progress—who maintain royalty while they pretend to practise liberty, and escape from revolution without submitting to despotism?"

This impatient anxiety for the downfall of England is fomented by many and various organs. It advocates at the same time tyranny at Naples and spoliation at Madrid. It inspired to M. Ledru Rollin his book on the decline of England—*La Décadence de l'Angleterre.* It inflames the zeal of all those advocates of despotism who mix up every day with their gloomy prophecies of the ruin of England, stupid and ignorant sarcasms against her manners and institutions.

Any one who cares for the future destiny of nations and of liberal principles in Europe must take a deep interest in inquiring whether these predictions are well founded—whether England will be able to overcome the various dangers which threaten her, to survive alone the general wreck and emerge triumphant

from the revolutionary deluge, or whether the day is at hand when the united choirs of all possible parties—courtiers, demagogues, fanatics, sycophants and the apostate parties and enslaved nations of the Continent—shall combine, in an insulting anthem of triumph, over this once great but now vanquished people.

"*Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us?*

"*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*"—ISAIAH, xiv. 10, 12.

I do not forget that, besides the passions thus leagued against her, other, more sober men, may also—not indeed wish her ruin, but impute to her some more real grievances, and doubt, as she appears to do herself, and even despair of the vitality of her system, and of her ability to fulfil the expectations derived from her past history. Yes, to the eyes of the true friends of liberty, of those who do not confound her cause with that revolutionary democracy which basely invites and servilely

accepts the levelling equality of Despotism—to critics of that respectable class I will admit that England is certainly not without faults, and that I may seem to have chosen an unfavourable moment for making her apology. The insupportable arrogance of the English Diplomacy towards the weak, and of the English Press towards everybody, has raised the just indignation of a vast number of reasonable men. Still more does the intrusive, aggressive, and dissolving influence exercised by the British Government, with respect to the rights and the faith of the Catholics in Switzerland and in the south of Europe, deserve the reprobation of every sincere Christian; and if I did not strictly confine myself in this sketch to the political question, it would oblige me to renew here the protestations I made elsewhere against the lamentable aberration of a race so naturally religious. In truth we have to deplore that for several years England should have so varied her attitude, should have passed so quickly from the extreme of invectives to the extreme of adulation, should have forgotten so much, equivocated so much,

and so often sacrificed right and liberty to her ambition, to her fears, and to her interests. She seemed to give up completely the honour of her free institutions to the pressure of the opposite party. This has been the last stroke to more than one noble heart amongst us!

But in political life, short of becoming the accomplice of one's own ruin and of making it irreparable, one must not give way to vexation or to discouragement, and above all not do so when called upon to appreciate a nation which has, like France herself, after some sudden and incomprehensible falls [*défaillances*], recovered herself still more abruptly. We must not forget what she *has* been for two centuries—what she *may* and what she certainly will become again. Between her and ourselves—between her and those who aspire to obtain and deserve the enjoyment of that well-regulated liberty that she now monopolises—there can be but misunderstandings, and no permanent rupture. We have really the same wants, the same duties, the same enemies! Is she threatened with the same dangers under

which we have sunk? That is the question—the only one I propose to answer; and, in contradiction to those sinister apprehensions and prophecies, I venture to offer myself as a witness, impartial in my judgment and confident in my facts.

No, England is *not* on the eve of perishing. No, she is not disgusted with her institutions, so prolific of good and of glory. No, she has not yet fallen so low as to prefer Democracy to Liberty, or Equality in servitude to the strength, the true independence that she draws from the old aristocratic traditions of her government. No, she will not follow the example of the Continent; and the enemies of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and *self-government*—both Socialists and Absolutists—will have to wait a long time before they see the day of her apostacy and her ruin.

It is not, however, without some misgivings that I so decidedly advance this opinion. We have all had, since 1848, personal and sad experience of the vanity of human foresight, and the frailty of human reason. Never, perhaps, did it please Heaven to defeat more

egregiously the calculations of wisdom or the prospects of power. There is always something of risk and temerity in speculating on the future destiny of any people. It is still more so with regard to the English, whose character is at once too solid and too complex to be superficially or suddenly studied.

Baron Bülow, who was for many years Prussian minister in London, told one of his countrymen who asked his opinion on the country where he had resided so long, "When I had been here three weeks, I was ready to write a book on England; after three months, the task appeared to me very difficult; and now that I have lived here three years, I find it impossible."

England is not like those Continental gardens or parks, with straight avenues of well-trimmed trees, where you look forward and backward, to the right and to the left, and see on all sides straight alleys, neatly gravelled, watered, and watched by a vigilant police. It is a vast and flourishing forest, where there are good and bad roads, paths straight and crooked, charming lawns and

abominable sloughs, centenary oaks and inextricable briars, but where all is spontaneous, robust, vigorous, and abounding in every part with life and nature. But you must explore it, sound it, penetrate it, through and through, in all directions and in all seasons, to form an idea of what it really is. Even then you will never be sure that your idea is exact or complete; but you will at least know and feel that there is in it a mass of life, strength, and beauty which must indeed one day perish like all that is mortal, and may to-morrow be consumed by the visitation of Heaven, but where nothing indicates as yet the rapid decline and early mortality that the enemies of England prognosticate for her.

But before I attempt to justify my impression by some facts and reasons, I must establish a fundamental distinction. I mean to confine this sketch to one point—her *internal* condition. I do not venture to criticise, nor, above all, to defend her foreign policy. I maintain, with regard to him who has for so many years directed it, the same opinion that I had before the catastrophe of 1848. I then

already saw in Lord Palmerston,—in the champion of Pacifico in Greece, and the oppressor of the small cantons of Switzerland,—a great contempt for the rights of the weak, and a ready ally of revolution against liberty. This opinion is amply confirmed by the deep sympathy he has since shown for some ideas and some institutions, of the popularity of which no one before 1848 would have dared to dream. The English people have been, it must be confessed, his but too faithful accomplices. But apart from this individual influence, I abandon to the enemies of the English people the task of examining her foreign policy. I recognise in it but too well the cruel and implacable self-love which characterises in history all ambitious nations, and, more than all others, the Romans, whom England reproduces so faithfully in her greatness, her constitutional liberty, her proud selfishness, and her indomitable energy.

One must however admit that her foreign policy—deserving of all reprobation when abstractedly judged—may appear less culpable

when compared with others. Let him whose government is guiltless of the same faults throw the first stone! It will not be either Austria or Prussia, who, before God and man, persevere in the guilty responsibility of the division of Poland. Still less Russia, whose insatiable and sanguinary avidity has at last met with a well-deserved chastisement. It will not be even France, where the spoliations and iniquities of the first Empire have not altered the *prestige* of the Napoleonian legend.

Let us then pass over the exterior policy of England—saying but one word of her position in the present war—to point out the error of those who fancied they saw a symptom of her ruin in the disorganization of her military services in the Crimea. I admit that she herself has made too much noise about her own disasters, and that the statesmen on whose shoulders all the responsibility has been thrown have submitted much too quietly to the reproaches with which they have been loaded. It appears to me that their defence is obvious and simple; and that the

real responsibility must fairly be charged on unforeseen and unforeseeable events, and as the natural consequences of the system voluntarily and scientifically adopted by England since her Parliamentary reform. The nation and the Government had without doubt singularly misunderstood the strength of the adversary they were going to fight on his own ground. Undoubtedly they shared the general illusion which the first defeats of the Russians by the Turks had created. Undoubtedly they had not calculated all the innumerable combinations of time, sickness, distance, and the elements. The genius of foresight had undoubtedly no seat in the Cabinet. But what right, after all, have the English people to wonder at and find fault with general results for which they ought to have been as well prepared as their ministers? England has not had, as France has in Algeria, an incomparable school, where our army has been for twenty years, guided by illustrious generals, inspirited by the examples of princes, young, gallant, and modest—an army practised in all the most laborious exercises of war, and ex-

posed to the vicissitudes of the most changeable climate, but supported by our admirable civil administration [*intendance*], which has been created altogether since 1835 from the ranks of our officers, who, having brought to those civil duties their military tradition of high honour and severe probity, have learned to surmount every local and material obstacle, and to combine activity with order, energy with integrity, under the salutary control of an implacable publicity. No other army in the world could begin a campaign with the advantages insured to the French army by this magnificent legacy of the Constitutional monarchy.

But England might console herself for this inferiority with the recollection of the various efforts of a different nature in which she had chosen to employ her long interval of peace. She had deliberately, obstinately, and systematically reduced her military establishments, her arsenals, her artillery, her depôts, below the level which the experience of the past and the great authority of the Duke of Wellington advised her to maintain. But it was

for the purpose of giving herself up entirely and without reserve to the immense developments of a new policy, of which the immediate objects were seductive, and the remote results incalculable—it was to emancipate the negroes of her colonies at the ransom of twenty millions sterling, to be paid by the mother-country—it was to abrogate the corn-laws, and to realise cheap living more than had been done or attempted in any other country—it was to suppress or diminish innumerable taxes on all the necessities and pleasures of life—it was to diminish her national debt, whilst all the countries on the Continent were increasing theirs. Such is the true balance-sheet of the savings and the expenditure of the English budget since 1814; and she may well feel, both in the design and the results of her peace policy, consolation for the mistakes of a first campaign, undertaken without reflection or foresight, but which nevertheless has shown the solidity, the patience, the discipline, and the imperturbable courage of the English soldier.

The first efforts of England in her wars on

the Continent have been generally unsuccessful; but that has been to her only an additional motive for perseverance and constancy in the task she had undertaken. Except in naval fights, the history of her prodigious struggle against the Revolution and the Empire offers nothing but a long series of reverses, until the genius of the Duke of Wellington came at last to crown with success her irresistible fortitude and perseverance. It is because England would not allow herself to be discouraged by the lamentable campaigns of the Duke of York in 1794 and 1799, or by the disastrous retreat of Sir John Moore in 1808, that it was given to her at last to triumph over the greatest captain of modern times. Whatever may be the fortune of the present war, one may feel well assured that England will put forward all the energy and perseverance which characterise her history and her national temper, in addition to the activity, the natural consequence of free institutions. She will exhibit once more, as she did from 1792 to 1814, the striking fact that criticism, discussion, the most un-

limited publicity—the daily, the incessant intervention of the press, and of parliamentary debate, the use and even the abuse of every form of popular intervention—do not impair the strength of a people worthy of being free, or the vigour, elasticity, and constancy which are the conditions and the guarantee of victory and ultimate triumph.*

Her political institutions supply her with all necessary means to introduce promptly and efficaciously into the organization of her army whatever changes are required by the march of time and the progress of her rivals, and against which custom and routine never will prevail. I do not say that she will be forced to establish the *conscription* in a country so much attached to individual liberty, but assuredly the present war will bring some important modifications in

* I desire no other proof of this than the resignation with which all England supports the immense income-tax, which was re-established solely to meet the wants of the present war, besides the enormous amount of two subscriptions for the families of the soldiers in the Crimean army. On the 20th of October last these subscriptions had reached the sum of thirty-five millions of francs (1,388,000*l.*).

her military system. The English army has to this day the virtues and faults of all aristocratic armies. When we read the letters from the English camp in such numbers, written with such complete liberty, and published with such courageous candour, we might believe them to be written by our own gallant men of times gone by, who, after having been victorious at Marignan and at Cérisolles, could not endure the dulness of their winter quarters on the soil of the enemy, and hastened to come back to the Court or to their estates, where they awaited the signal of another battle. By its heroic bravery, by its personal composition, and by the too great distance between the soldier and the officer, as also by the slowness of its movements, by its annoyance and impatience at the prolonged fatigues of the modern strategy,—lastly, by the difficulty it finds in getting through all the cares and troubles of a camp life, the British army is too much like what our armies were in the time of Francis I. or Louis XIV. These have indeed honoured the name and the flag

of France, but they could bear no comparison, except on the field of battle, with our modern legions, inured to all fatigues, accustomed to create to themselves in the bivouac all the resources of domestic life, and in whom a severe and intelligent discipline has abated nothing of the incomparable valour of their fathers.

But the English know and understand their deficiencies. We may be sure that they will not despair, but look about and find the remedy; and when once found, the admirable mechanism of their constitution will enable them to apply it with the energetic resolution and practical efficacy which have never failed them.

This reminds me of a page too little known of an author* of whom a premature death has deprived the French press, and which illustrates my subject too well not to be mentioned here:—

"In the mortal struggle against the Re-

* M. Jules Maurel, who published at Bruxelles, in 1852, a remarkable work entitled *Le Duc de Wellington*.

public and the Empire, the essential strength of England was in her Institutions. The British Government carried on war for two-and-twenty years, by bringing in aid of it all the resources of liberty, amidst the clamorous opposition in Parliament and the press, in the face of mob-meetings, reform petitions, street riots, and broken windows, without sacrificing one tittle of its legitimate rights, and without thinking of yielding in a single instance, either to its internal or external assailants. . .

"The dishonesty of party feeling, the injustice and self-interest of parliamentary opposition, the daily excitements of the popular assemblies, and hardly less frequently of the electoral hustings, were no less useful to it than its intelligence and its patriotism. At a time when the Continent could not boast of a single independent voice, or one free printing-press, every passion, good as well as bad, was incessantly kept alive in the British empire, and unconsciously contributed to the same end. No one in England could be either a deceiver or a dupe above a day. This movement and noise, which betrayed

Napoleon into thinking that England was always on the point of exploding like a barrel of gunpowder, was only the life of a free people. The barrel of gunpowder still remained where it was, to be at last directed against himself; and it now turns out that it is the very sapient, docile, and amiable nation on this side of the Channel which amuses itself in those explosions which Napoleon prognosticated for their neighbours. . . . .

"On the Continent, victories are exaggerated and defeats are concealed or palliated; in England, the most indubitable success always finds jealous and malicious censors; and yet it is very evident that neither the tumult of public meetings, the irritation of parliamentary opposition, nor the indiscretion of the press, lessened in any degree the confidence of the generals or the bravery of the soldiers."

SECTION II.

OF WHAT MISLEADS PEOPLE'S JUDGMENT ABOUT ENGLAND.

LET us now turn our attention to the main object that I propose to myself—an appreciation of the internal condition of England; and begin by recognising the fact we have been just now intimating, and which is at once the essence of her national existence, and the source of the common mistakes of those who attempt to judge her. Everything there is discussed, criticised, and disputed without reserve. Everything is done under the fullest expansion of light and noise. Nothing escapes that universal law of Publicity. Religion, politics, war, legislation, administration—one and all must pass and repass daily through that popular sieve. Strangers who live altogether in another sphere are at first astounded and alarmed at such a sight. They judge

of what would happen to them, and their neighbours, and their governments, if put to the same trial, and from it they come to conclusions entirely erroneous, but which they still go on repeating over and over again, in spite of the thousand-times-repeated contradictions of experience. To him who lives in a dungeon utterly dark, a ray of light coming in through the chink of a door is enough to dazzle and deceive his sight: to him who has enjoyed a long interval of quiet and silence, a trifling noise becomes annoying: to him who has never been on the sea a slight squall seems a hurricane. But the man who bustles through life in the light of day, in the midst of noise and labour, or of the dangers of the sea, wonders how any one can be dazzled or startled with such petty accidents.

The first impression of an inexperienced person, or of a child, entering a large manufactory, is to wonder how one can breathe—how order can be maintained, in the midst of so crowded a population, of such constant motion and unceasing noise; how the mind and the nerves can bear the racket of those

whirling wheels, grinding saws, creaking screws—with the discordant whistle of the engine, the nauseous smell of grease, the blinding clouds of smoke; and yet all goes on smoothly—all comes right—all succeeds; and out of this apparent confusion—this deafening din—this swarm of men, come master-works of ingenuity, mechanism, and industry—the arms and instruments which insure the victories of our soldiers, or the prodigies of elegance and taste which serve to adorn our wives and daughters.

Such are, however, always and everywhere, the real conditions of life—of true life—of busy life—the only life worth living for! That activity which is the strength of individuals, is also the strength of nations—habits of danger, constant effort, liberty of motion. Who has ever dreamt of life with a constant shade over the eyes, and with cotton in the ears, and no support but a staff held by the hand of a master? When I see a man in that condition, I pity and respect the infirmities of old age, but I do not admit it to be a fair sample of human existence; and

when you show me a whole nation, not only fallen into this state, but boasting of it as the most perfect form of society, I fly from it at least in heart and mind, and my spirit takes its flight to those happier regions (too rarely to be found) whose people have long since emerged from the swaddling-clothes of infancy, without yet thinking of laying themselves down on the bed of decrepitude.

Another source of frequent mistakes in a foreigner's opinion of England is, the ill that all the English love to say of one another, of themselves, of their country, of their laws, of their Government. They are like those impatient and querulous *grands seigneurs*, who, while they are perfectly convinced of their own grandeur, of their superiority in everything, affect to make very little account of whatever belongs to them. Such fits of ostentatious humility last until some imprudent bystander takes my lord at his word, and echoes back or acts on his lordship's complaint or depreciation; then the noble grumbler will draw himself up, resume his self-satisfaction, and seldom fail to make his

too complaisant respondent unpleasantly sensible of his mistake. Thus it is in the nature of nations; the freer and more confident they feel in their own stability, the more ready are they to affect exaggerated apprehensions of any inconveniences and difficulties they may happen to be under: like those young men who, though full of life and activity, pretend, at the first disappointment they meet with, to despair of everything, and declare that they are disgusted and tired of life, perhaps at the very moment when they are about to attain the object of their affection or ambition.

All these grumblers may perhaps be sincere, but they are ridiculous; and though such complaints may sometimes be the mere wantonness of a superabundance of youth and strength, they sometimes degenerate into serious mischief. France herself, under her parliamentary tyranny, indulged in the melancholy amusement of self-slander, but has not had the good fortune to find much consolatory contradiction. We all have said so much ill of ourselves to ourselves, that we

have at last been taken at our word, and we are treated, especially in England, as a people absolutely incapable of producing or of keeping any liberal institution. The Englishman takes good care not to come to the same conclusion with regard to himself; he feels himself safe from those sudden emotions of vexation and despondency which overpower us; he feels that he is not living in a tent, liable to be blown down by any accidental failure of a rope or a peg. He knows that his house is not made of glass, and that he may throw stones at it with impunity. He knows, from the experience of the past, that England may amuse herself in this way without danger, and that for nearly two centuries her journalists, her pamphleteers, frequently her orators, and sometimes even her greatest writers, have not been ashamed of washing their dirty linen in public.

It is impossible for any one ever so little acquainted with the political history of England not to smile at the futility of the grounds on which we hear periodically announced the near and inevitable ruin of this last asylum of

modern liberty. Now it is a formidable meeting, where some speakers of more or less notoriety have held seditious language against the sovereign; then again it is a crash of broken windows in some aristocratic quarter of the town; now it is the tumultuous assemblage of a hundred thousand individuals, with accompaniments of shoutings, banners, and processions; then, again, it is the press, teeming with seditious invectives against all the men and all the things supposed to be most honoured and revered by the British people. But they forget that all this is no novelty—that it has always been so since England has been free — since she has accepted the inconveniences and distortions of liberty together with its inseparable and incomparable benefits. In 1780, in the best days of the aristocratic government and of the most splendid eloquence of the English Parliament, London was in the power of a low mob, who opened the prisons and burnt the houses of several of the principal persons in the kingdom. In 1830, fifteen years after the battle of Waterloo, the windows of the Duke of Wellington were

broken; it was on this occasion that he put up those shutters we still see to his windows, to stand the artillery of the mob. A few years later, O'Connell assembled in the open air one hundred thousand Irishmen, thrilling with passion under his master hand, and disposed, as everybody believed, to throw themselves headlong at a nod from him into all the perils of a civil war. And while these actual commotions were going on, and before as well as after, eloquent voices, well listened to and admired, were denouncing the national institutions as snares, the Parliament as a house of ill fame, the Aristocracy as a class of oppressors and jobbers, and the English people as an ignoble mass of dupes and slaves, crushed under taxation and affronts by an insatiable oligarchy. All this has been said and repeated on all subjects and at all times; all this has been said, and perhaps believed; all this will be said, and perhaps believed again; but all has passed, and will pass, like a shower or squall, which, however violent, does little or no permanent damage. But with all his affected modesty and with all these ugly ap-

pearances and alarming incidents, the Englishman is not a whit the less persuaded that his country is the first country in the world; he does not say so till he is contradicted, but he believes it, and for doing so he has some very good reasons, and it only rests with himself to make these reasons still better.

SECTION III.

THE TWO DEMOCRACIES.

HERE is, then, the problem which we have to solve:—Will England be able to stand erect and secure in the midst of a general European commotion? and will she remain then absolutely what she is to-day? To the first of these questions we may boldly answer *Yes;* and to the second, *No.* England possesses, more than any other nation in the world, the essential conditions of social, moral, and material life; but she will live, as she has always lived, in a gradual transformation, mixing up, with an instinctive art and a marvellous sagacity, traditionary experience and prudence with the active spirit of advance, and blending the most comprehensive attention to general interests with a scrupulous care of the social rights and the individual liberty of the meanest of her citizens.

The steady progress and the ultimate triumph of Democracy are now-a-days facts as incontestable and as evident as the progress and the triumph of absolute monarchy from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. Democracy *governs* everywhere, though it may not yet *reign* everywhere. It is foolish not to confess its victory; foolish also to oppose it, so long as it does not become oppression, so long as it does not carry with it some consequences incompatible with one's conscience and good sense.

But it is too evident that there are on the great stage of the world *two* democracies. There is that democracy which recognises the laws of honour and equity, which has confidence in the power of truth and of justice, which only requires, to insure their triumph, liberty to assert them, which has already removed all those injurious and unjust barriers which intercepted the masses of mankind from the enjoyment of all the rights and all the benefits to which they are entitled by nature. It has insured to all, equality before the law, under taxation and before the enemy, with

accessibility to all employments, emoluments, and honours; and these conquests, thank God, insured to us for ever, are at least as dear, and much more necessary to us than they are to our antagonists. This democracy desires the public man to be, first of all, the son of his own works; but it also requires intelligence and virtue to be the principal conditions of the exercise of power, and by that it obliges itself to recognise all legitimate superiority and to respect it when known.

This democracy, whatever may be the form it chooses to take, whether it be constitutional monarchy or moderate republicanism, has already for its success the wishes and the help of all well-thinking and well-informed men.

But there is another democracy, jealous, rancorous, furious, the daughter of Envy, which Bossuet has so well illustrated as "*the dark and secret product of pride and weakness.*" Its genius consists in contesting and destroying all the superiorities which arise out of the nature of things such as the historic existence of mankind constitutes and proclaims them. It is the enemy of all that is lasting, of

all that is solid, of all that resists, and of all that increases and improves. It denies the gradual progress of liberty; it insults its own natural allies; it persecutes especially with an implacable ingratitude the monarchs who have either introduced it or lent themselves to it; it renders the life of nations a perpetual storm, and it drives them to look for a refuge in the first shelter or harbour which presents itself, and to give themselves up as slaves or hostages to any one who can save them from the wreck.

Thanks to Heaven, and be it said to the honour of humanity, this democracy is not the only one that we can imagine or have seen, but it is, alas! the only one that the modern democrats on the Continent have known how to establish and exercise during their short triumphs. With them it is not a liberal, but an exclusive democracy, which must inevitably lead to that exclusive power which constitutes despotism. And when the work is done, have we not always seen the revolutionary democracy console itself for its disappointments and miscalculations by hook-

ing itself on to the triumphs of Force, and in working them up to its own profit? Does it not always coalesce with what is now understood by the term absolute monarch—to proscribe and suppress everywhere true and natural liberty, stigmatising it sometimes as an aristocracy, sometimes as a conspiracy? Do not such an exclusive democracy and such an absolute monarchy exhibit an equal enmity against all real independence, against all that stands by its own strength, against all that lives by its own spirit? Have not that exclusive democracy and that absolute monarchy substituted mechanical, artificial, and ephemeral restrictions for the moral, natural, and traditional guarantees? and have they not everywhere condemned the value and dignity of the individual man to be absorbed by and confounded in the State? Do they not simultaneously practise ostracism against capacity, courage, and honesty? Have they not both as their fundamental principle the repudiation of the only government really legitimate and natural—that of men worthy to govern by their superior position, talents,

and virtues? Do they not both set up as a standard, without an appeal, the ascendency of *numbers*—that is to say, the right of the strongest, even in the utmost excesses of blindness and brutality?

We suppose of course, after all that we have seen, that there is nobody now-a-days so inexperienced as not to see distinctly how different the interests of true liberty are from the results of revolution. A great authority has spoken on that point:—"*Don't you see,*" said Napoleon I. to Thibeaudeau in 1802,* "*that it is the enemies of the Revolution who plead most warmly in favour of political liberty?*" Ten years before that, one of the men who had most contributed to deprive the glorious movement of 1789 of its legitimate and liberal character, predicted, in these words, what would be the end of the revolution of which he had been so eloquent a champion:

"Another step, and the government can no longer exist, or must be totally concen-

* After the *Sénatus-Consulte* of the 16th Thermidor. See the Mémoires de Thibeaudeau, *Conventionnel, Conseiller d'Etat, Sénateur.*

trated in the executive power of *one*. I see in the distance Despotism smiling at our little measures, at our little views, at our little passions, while it builds slyly on our mistakes and follies its future expectations. What was called the Revolution is accomplished. Our people will no longer submit to their old despots; but if we do not take care, they are ready enough to create for themselves new ones, whose power, more recent and more popular, will be a thousand times more dangerous."*

Let us then fairly acknowledge the truth: the progress of democracy is the leading fact of modern society, but it is also its greatest danger, and from this danger no country has as yet been able to escape. To restrain and guide democracy without debasing it, to regulate and reconcile it with a liberal monarchy or a conservative republic—such is the problem of our age; but it is a problem which has been as yet nowhere solved, except in England. The fact and the danger exist in England as everywhere else; but, whilst on

* Adrien Duport, Assemblée Constituante, May 17, 1791.

the Continent the victories of Democracy have everywhere ended in the sacrifice of liberty—have everywhere forced the people to vacillate between the humiliating alternatives of anarchy and despotism, everything announces that in England its progress will conciliate itself with the stability of right, with the maintenance of ancient liberty, and with the respect due to individual dignity. If it should be so, as we firmly believe, England, after having alone amongst the great nations of Europe preserved her honour and her public life from the despotic encroachments of the last two centuries, will have the glorious privilege to see the ark of Rights and Liberty override the deluge with which the revolutionary democracy threatens to drown and bury ours.

SECTION IV.

OF DEMOCRACY IN ENGLAND.

LET us now satisfy ourselves as to the symptoms of the disease before we venture to point out a remedy. I need not repeat, that I do not consider as an evil that which many, both advocates and adversaries, of revolutionary democracy too often confound with it: I mean the progress of the natural rights of the people, their equality before the law, their well-being and instruction, and the emancipation for all religious consciences from all *secular* restraint. These all are the works of liberty, and not those of revolutions, and liberty alone can be their guarantee and safeguard; it alone can prevent these great benefits being perverted into wrong—at first the seeds, and afterwards the essence and justification of despotism.

Thanks to liberty, it is by the natural

motion of our minds, by the irresistible march of intellect, by the contact, now become so general, of races and individuals, that light has been thrown on a great number of points that were left for a long time in the dark. Things that for ages appeared natural, and just, and simple, are now exposed in all their real iniquity, and are become impossible to maintain in spite of the resistance of compromised interests and of narrow and prejudiced minds. If proud and free England could only maintain her constitution by the exclusion of the Catholics from all political rights, by the preservation of the rotten boroughs, and by taxing the bread of the poor to the profit of the rich, she would be unworthy of holding the place that none can dispute to her among all free nations. But those iniquities, when once understood and pointed out, could not survive the judiciously-prolonged effort of the conscience of the public, and let us say so with a retrospective pride, they could not co-exist in the neighbourhood of a France where there existed at that time the most scrupulous equality before the

law, as well as true liberty both political and religious.

The worst enemies of the aristocracy could alone wish it to retain the odious responsibility of the maintenance of those old abuses. The heads themselves of the aristocracy felt this; the Duke of Wellington, Lord Grey, and Sir Robert Peel undertook at the right moment, and with firm and energetic hands, to prune the old tree, to cut off its dead branches, and restore to it its life and vigour. Catholic Emancipation, Parliamentary Reform, and the Abolition of the Corn-Laws have not been victories gained by the democracy—they have been the glorious and legitimate conquests of reason, justice, and social charity.

But, distinct from and independent of the spirit of justice and liberty which has gained these victories, there is, it must be confessed, in the hearts of the present generation a deep and impetuous under-current of revolutionary spirit; this revolutionary spirit very often helps by its irresistible force the achievement of some great struggle, with whose origin and real motive it has no concern.

But it survives those struggles, always goes far beyond the wholesome object, and becomes the most insatiable, implacable, and formidable instrument of mischief that exists on earth.

What shows the progress of this spirit in England, and proves its secret and terrible strength, is not the ebullitions which always appear on the surface of the great caldron,—it is not those insignificant riots which happen here and there,—it is not the seditious invectives of this or that newspaper, or of this or that mob orator. There are other symptoms of the disease, and of a much graver nature.

First, it is that exaggerated irritation of public opinion, much deeper even than loud, during the first months of the Crimean expedition. It is the nature of an unwholesome democracy not to be able to support adversity; and the first symptom of the encroachment of that spirit of disorder which ends in the debasement and the ruin of great nations, is not to know how to explain, except as the results of treason or incapacity, the variable and in-

evitable chances of war. England did allow herself last winter to be thus touched by one of the radical infirmities of democracy. She forgot that the distinctive character of free and aristocratic governments is to be cool and collected in good as well as in bad fortune, as Rome was in presence of Hannibal and Pyrrhus, and as England herself under the two Pitts.

Another symptom, still more serious and lasting, manifests itself in the general tone and style of the literature of the day. Books and newspapers, reviews and pamphlets, prose and poetry, history and romance, breathe the same spirit of criticising and depreciating the higher classes of society and all the ancient institutions of the country; and having thus touched on the subject of novels, it will not be beside our purpose to compare those of Dickens with those of Walter Scott, as a criterion of the change of the public mind in the last thirty years. In the works of the Scotch Baronet there is nothing in any degree antagonistic to monarchical or aristocratic ideas—quite the reverse. While he

represents with incomparable talent the manners and language of the Scotch peasants and middle classes, he has, on the other hand, almost always chosen his heroes and heroines in the higher ranks. This has not a little contributed to the gigantic popularity that he enjoyed in England before he won it from all Europe.

On the contrary, the most popular novelist of our days takes all his subjects and characters from the inferior classes; and the *servum pecus* of imitators have naturally rushed after him in the path where he found such an unexpected success.

In other and graver walks of literature, even in works of political discussion or historical inquiry, it is indisputable that bitter and violent satire against all aristocratic habits and ideas is growing by degrees to be the string which vibrates the strongest and the longest.

In England, democracy now affects a form that it had adopted on the Continent only before it knew its own strength, or after having suffered many bitter mishaps and

many humiliating defeats. English literature begins to applaud power obtained by violence, and it seems to envy those nations who have sacrificed their public rights, their history, and their honour, to brute force incarnated in individual men.

This abject devotion to human idols under the name of heroes—this *hero-worship*, as it is now called—this adulation of triumphant violence has found an eloquent advocate in Mr. Carlyle, whose admitted talent deserves to be mentioned as having more than any other attempted to deprave the public mind in England, and to destroy the *prestige* of her ancient institutions. After having travestied the History of the French Revolution in the Rabelais style, where the atrocities of the actors and the innocence of the victims are confounded and laughed at with a revolting and disgusting buffoonery, Mr. Carlyle tried to impose on England a sort of Cromwell-worship, *to begin with*. He has many admirers and many copyists. A number of periodicals have become the echo of his doctrine. This adoration of Force—this kissing

of the iron hand—is nothing but a consequence—apparently paradoxical, but profoundly logical—of the spirit of democracy cleverly grafted on the interests and the passions of the moment. It may help to explain certain recent phenomena of popular admiration in England which have astonished the world. Some languishing poets make themselves the organs and partisans of this admiration and of this sickly envy, in some elegies which contrast strangely with the national pride which inflamed the poets and prose writers of the last century* in all ranks of society. We remember that in the reign of

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* Mark the contrast between what is written now in England and the celebrated verses of Lord Lyttelton written in Paris in 1728:—

"O native isle! fair Freedom's happiest seat . . .
When shall I see thy fields . . .
When in the shade of laws that long have stood,
Of fearless independence wisely vain,
The proudest slave of Bourbon's race disdain!
Yet oh! what doubt, what sad presaging voice
Whispers within, and bids me not rejoice;
Bids me contemplate every state around,
From sultry Spain to Norway's icy bound;
Bids their lost rights, their ruin'd glories see,
And tells me these like England once were free!"

In another passage he speaks of France under Louis XV. in these terms:—

"A nation

Louis XIV. the French refugees in England published a protestation, entitled '*The Sighs of enslaved France for Liberty.*' In our time, if the verses and prose of those panegyrists of revolutionary reform were deserving of so great an honour, we might form a miscellany of complaints, entitled '*The Sighs of free England for Slavery!*'

It is not only for the meridian of France that the English Radical journals, such as the 'Daily News' and the 'Examiner,' vaunt

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. . . "A nation here I pity and admire,
Whom noblest sentiments of glory fire,
Yet taught by custom's force and bigot fear
To serve with pride and boast the yoke they bear,
Whose nobles, born to cringe and to command,
In courts a mean, in camps a gen'rous band,
From each low tool of power content receive
Those laws their dreaded arms to Europe give!"

Another poet, Akenside, in an Ode published in 1758, *dedicated to the country gentlemen of England*, well describes the contempt he felt for the subjection of Europe, and the contrast between the Continental races and the English gentry, who rivalled the Romans in their agriculture and political liberty:—

"Whither is Europe's ancient spirit fled?
Where are those valiant tenants of her shore?
Freeman and soldier was their common name
Now in the front of battle charg'd the foe,
Now in full councils check'd encroaching power.
But who are ye? From Ebro's loitering sons
To Tiber's pageants, to the sports of Seine . .
Ye lost, ye self-deserted!
See rifled nations crouch beneath their rod."

the blessings of a despotism so *new*, *just*, *and intelligent* as ours; even on questions of their own domestic policy, we find this revolutionary school invoking, in contradiction to the old institutions of England, the gradual development of *bureaucratie* and centralisation—a pernicious system which they know full well must infallibly undermine and destroy all the traditional strength and the independence of their country. We might even mention more than one democratic writer who has lately addressed to Royalty direct and explicit invitations and provocations to the Crown to shake off the yoke of parliamentary control, promising it the help of the democracy, recommending a union of the Crown and the People, to arrive at a revolution like that of Denmark in 1660. It is especially to Prince Albert, the Queen's husband, that these provocations are addressed; and some people have fancied that a recent speech*

* Speech of Prince Albert on the 9th of June, 1855, at the Trinity House dinner, in proposing the Ministers' health :—

"You find your enemy with all that force which unity of purpose and action, impenetrable secrecy, and uncontrolled despotic

pronounced by His Royal Highness, being a severe criticism on the English Government with regard to the war administration, was an indirect answer to these provocations. In short, it cannot be denied that a new literary and political school is trying to create in the

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power have given, while we have to meet him under a state of things intended for peace and for the promotion of that very civilisation, the offspring of public discussion, of the frictions of parties, and of the popular control on the government and the state (hear).

"The Queen has no power to levy troops, nor has she any at her command but such as offer their voluntary services (hear). Her government can take no measure for the prosecution of the war which it has not beforehand to explain in parliament. Her armies and fleets can make no movements, nor even prepare for any, without their being publicly announced in the papers. No mistake, however trifling, can occur, no want or weakness exist, which is not at once denounced, and even sometimes exaggerated with a kind of morbid satisfaction (loud and continued cheering).

"The Queen's ambassador can enter into no negotiation without the government having to defend him by entering into all the arguments which that negotiator, in order to be successful, ought to be able to shut up in the innermost recesses of his heart (loud cheers). Nay, at the most critical position, when war and diplomatic relations may be at their height, an adverse vote in parliament may in a moment deprive the Queen of the whole of her confidential servants. Gentlemen, our constitutional government is undergoing a heavy trial, and we shall not get successfully through it unless the country will grant its confidence—patriotic, intelligent, and self-denying confidence — to her Majesty's government (loud cheers)."

English people a spirit of dissatisfaction and disgust at its immemorial institutions, a passion to ape the democracies of the Continent, and a hope of finally concluding one of those shameful bargains between a people and its Government, in which the result is that the Government abdicates its morality and the people its honour.

These morbid tendencies to dishonour—this temporary degradation—this insolent audacity of paradox, coincides unfortunately with a phenomenon which periodically occurs in the history of all nations that have a history. There are seasons of weakness and prostration when the political and intellectual genius of a nation is eclipsed. In countries deadened by despotism, such as Spain since the time of Charles V., these eclipses last for two or three centuries. In free countries, like England since William III., they last some years. However, that which the English people is now undergoing disturbs and humbles it. It helps the dark efforts of those prophets of disorder and of the surrender of individual opinion. With a number of superior men in

various ways, England has not at present found any equal to the great men whose recollections are still alive in her memory and heart.

That marvellous constellation of orators beginning with Chatham and ending with Canning, has left nothing but a series of interrupted echoes. Not a single living statesman can pretend to the authority of Wellington, nor has succeeded to the generous *initiative* of Peel. Except Mr. Macaulay, whose superiority as historian over all his predecessors needs no demonstration, even the writers who do not meddle with politics have nothing of that commanding popularity which in the first years of this century became the inheritance of Byron, Scott, and Moore. The general level of talent, of capacity, of influence, is lowered.

This is the most certain symptom of the progress of democracy, such as it now-a-days exhibits itself, by repudiating all individual authority and all independent strength.

We are forced, then, to admit the fact that the exclusive authority of former ideas is weakening, as is also the *prestige* of ancient

institutions. In other words, the deeply aristocratical character of society and liberty in England is wearing out. It is still very deeply rooted, and its *prestige* is still generally felt; but it is far from being what it formerly was. A *lord* is still a great person,—great beyond what we can comprehend on the Continent; but he is no longer the lord of other days. The combination of ideas and habits which attached themselves to that distinction—to that untranslatable title—have suffered a similar alteration. It may perhaps be a good, perhaps an evil; at all events it is a fact. We cannot attempt to deny it, but, on the other hand, let us not exaggerate its consequences.

SECTION V.

THE GROUNDS OF BETTER HOPE.

IN the first place England, fortunately for her, is not the pedantic slave of logic. She has at all times reserved for herself an unbounded right to indulge when she pleases in the most glaring inconsistencies. She cares little for the strictness of logic when it would tend to any sacrifice of her honour, her happiness, or her safety. She does not allow herself to be misled by the argumentations of chimerical and rigid theorists, nor subjected to the pedantic rigour of their conclusions. She has at all times estimated at their proper value those arrogant and perfidious sophists who think to reconcile their dupes and their victims to their perdition by telling them, like the Satan of Dante—

Forse
Tu non pensavi ch' io loïco fossi!

It is here that is more particularly observable the superior sagacity with which this nation is endowed. After having either laid down for herself, or accepted from others, a principle, she does not therefore think herself obliged to be led in its name to visionary experiments and an inscrutable abyss. She dreads, and with reason, the seductions of theories which, in politics more than in anything else, are liable to conditions and exceptions. One may say that her whole history is that of a constant struggle against the exaggerated consequences of the principles that she had either recognized or endured. She, as well as all Europe, accepted in the Middle Ages the religious and feudal character of royal authority; and she has scrupulously preserved its *terminology* up to this day. Here, and here only, one still hears, as in the time of Queen Elizabeth, of *the Queen's possessions, the Queen's army, the Queen's ships*; here only the highest tribunal is called *the Queen's Bench*, the tranquillity of the streets *the Queen's peace*; the House of Commons itself, Sovereign in reality of the country, addresses the throne as *Your*

faithful Commons. Nobody dreams of repudiating, as our opposition deputies did fifteen years ago, the name of *subjects* of the Crown; but neither does anybody think of sacrificing to the Sovereign his own dignity, conscience, or reputation. Whilst in other places doctors in law and doctors in theology deduced from these historical forms all their theories of divine right and royal omnipotence, in England good sense and justice have made them mere fictions—still preserved out of respect to the memory of the times from which they have inherited such solid advantages, that they are not inclined to part even with their forms. The English have left to royalty the *scenery*—the decorative ornaments of power; but they have kept the substance for themselves, which is surely better than to allow oneself to be duped by fine theories—satisfied with empty words which either have no practical meaning, or only serve as pretences for the most revolting abuses.

Some historians relate with complacency that a preacher, having preached before Philip II. of Spain that kings had an abso-

lute power over the persons and properties of their subjects, was condemned by the Inquisition to a public retractation. This farce, as a clever and pious author * justly observes, may have comforted and even edified a nation passionately enamoured of the despotism which was to crush both her moral and material greatness; but it did not prevent Philip II. from destroying, unblushingly, the liberties of Aragon and Belgium, and putting to death, without trial and in secret, the most illustrious of his subjects, his own son included.

Fiction for fiction, I prefer the English system, which to this day obliges the proudest Aristocrat or the most ardent Liberal to bend the knee before the Queen on her throne, when presenting to her the speech that the ministers of the parliamentary majority oblige her to pronounce, while they choose that humble posture to remind Royalty of the limits of its power, and of the conditions for its duration.

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* M. Albert du Boys, *Histoire du Droit Criminel chez les Peuples Modernes*, c. 43.

On the other hand, after having, by the Revolution of 1688, put the public liberties under the guarantee of a change of dynasty, the British people have vigorously rejected the doctrines which have frequently attempted to avail themselves of that precedent and principle to diminish and humble the influence of royalty, then re-established, and to substitute a republic for the limited and constitutional monarchy. When the English nation wishes for a reform, or an advance in any direction, it devotes all the energy and the incomparable perseverance of the national character to obtain it; and *there* it stops. Never, hitherto, has it compromised or dishonoured those victories; never has it gone beyond its object. It will therefore not imitate those countries where every successful movement — *liberty* yesterday — *authority* today—begins on the very morrow of its victory to dig its own grave by the hands of the courtiers and logicians of the triumphant party, where the proclamation of a principle, be it a new one or a revived one, drags immediately after it the destruction of all the

checks and counter-weights which were opposed to it before its triumph, and which would be much more necessary to it after the triumph than before.

SECTION VI.

WHAT OF ARISTOCRACY REMAINS IN ENGLAND.

ENGLAND will then open her doors to Democracy, but, at the same time, she will set limits to its advance. In all the changes and institutions implicated in that momentous word, all that is wise, legitimate, and necessary will be adopted, and all that is violent, excessive, compromising to political liberty or personal independence, will be for a long time to come thrown back into the category of utopias and factions. Democracy will come, but not unquestioned or unresisted: it will find the most important posts occupied, and the garrison on the alert, and will soon see that the English Aristocracy is neither blind enough nor exclusive enough to afford it the easy and dangerous triumphs that the Continental aristocracies have allowed their enemies.

To understand well the situation of affairs

across the Channel we must understand what this Aristocracy in reality is, and particularly *what it is not.* Although so much has been said and written on this subject, we must not relax our endeavours to study and to sound it, for the political history of the world does assuredly not present another example of an institution so artfully contrived and so durable, so elastic and so energetic.

It is necessary to bear in mind that the English Aristocracy is by no means a body animated throughout by the same spirit and rigidly framed to one model. It is a body as various in form and variable in spirit as life itself. It is said that during the Neapolitan revolution of 1820 the mob collected under the windows of the old King, Ferdinand IV., were calling out, "Sire, a constitution! we want a constitution!" The King, frightened and ready to concede everything till the Austrians should come to his rescue, appeared on the balcony and answered them, "*Yes, my children, you shall have a constitution; one, and even two if you like!*" If there is in England but one constitution, and that one very much

modified of late, and liable to become still more so, there are, on the other hand, two aristocracies. First there is that of the two old parties, the Whigs and Tories, which goes on diminishing and transforming itself every day. While one of these is in office, the other is always on the look-out for the faults and mistakes of its rival. It is for ever on the watch for any opportunity of displacing and replacing the other, and all useful measures of reform which it becomes necessary to introduce, all serious dissatisfaction which requires to be appeased, are to this rival so many steps and strategical means to the conquest of Downing Street. Wholesome concessions are thus, as it were, put up to auction, and the general good is thus produced by the competition of conflicting parties.

During the last few years the Tories have shown that they know as well as the Whigs how to employ these tactics; and the sacrifice of the rotten boroughs and of the corn-laws appearing to be henceforth irrevocable, some of the most intelligent of them have dedicated themselves to the consideration of the ques-

tions regarding the working and indigent classes, and make such questions their special business. Witness the efforts of Sir John Pakington on the question of education, and those of Lord Shaftesbury, so successful and so meritorious, on the sanitary condition of lodging-houses, ragged-schools, the limitation of the work of women and children in the manufactories, and their absolute interdiction from labour in the mines.

I always see some aristocrat or *oligarque* foremost amongst the movers or auxiliaries of every new and useful project. In general they are young, but not always. Sometimes an ex-minister or a viceroy on the shelf, a retired chancellor, or perhaps a duke in the plenitude of his age and fortune, disputes with the younger *débutants* these forward parts on the stage of the world. But, young or old, one may be always sure to find a man of great name and consideration at the head of every movement that can affect the future condition of the country.

With a sagacity never at fault, this old Aristocracy, represented by its younger scions,

knows not only when it ought to concede, but it knows also when to take the initiative of the gravest and most fruitful measures. Thus it was that young Pitt, before he became at three-and-twenty Chancellor of the Exchequer, became the champion of Parliamentary Reform; and that his rival, Fox, whose origin was more aristocratic than Pitt's, remained all his life at the head of the popular interest.

These aristocratic aspirants to power occasionally change and interchange their opinions or their colours, but there always remains some one of their original crew or of their order to replace them when wanted.

Such, after all, is the art of governing mankind. It requires great vigilance and constant activity, but above all, that self-possession, independence, and vitality, that the nobility of the other countries of Europe had so miserably sacrificed to the puerile vanities of court favour and the frivolous enjoyments of court life.

But these party-tactics, clever as they are, could not have succeeded if the two great divisions of the English Aristocracy had remained

inaccessible to the talents, the services, the ambitions of the inferior classes of society: fortunately even for itself it was not so. Everybody sees, but no one has sufficiently appreciated, the admirable mechanism by which the peerage opens its ranks and closes them again; how it attracts all the great notabilities of the nation—in law, in arms, in diplomacy, in finance—without any regard as to their origin, whether more or less popular, at the same time that it sends back into the mass of the people all its collateral branches, which, beginning at the younger grandchildren of peers, fall into the general course of society, without titles or any distinctive marks of their noble origin.

This constant *come and go* movement, which introduces into the supreme ranks of the aristocracy some young and vigorous elements, while it throws off all that is superfluous and useless—which establishes a sort of permanent rotation between the people and the peerage—is not the result of skilful legislation, but the political and social instinct of the country. It began in the middle ages.

In fact it is as old as the peerage itself; and it is by it that this great institution has escaped the evils attending, and inseparably united in all other countries with, a powerful aristocracy; as in Germany and at Venice. It is thus that it remains in England a political body at once patrician and popular; not an exclusive class narrowly entrenched in its own individuality, and condemned to perish of inanition and sterile pride.

Here, undoubtedly, as everywhere else when human beings are exposed to the temptations of opulence, luxury, and idleness, there may have grown up a certain class, exclusive, vain, and frivolous, whose pretensions, too easily submitted to, are felt, not indeed in the direction of political affairs, but in their relations with the world and the sociabilities of common life. This evil is gradually disappearing; and, moreover, it has never happened in England that the pride and privileges of the aristocracy towards their inferiors have assumed those humiliating forms and produced the deplorable results which in other countries have

sown the seeds of incurable animosity in the hearts of the middle classes. This is explained not only by the permanent fusion, just described, of the younger branches of the peerage with the rest of the nation, but above all by the habit of the English nobility not to reckon equality of birth as an indispensable, or even a primary condition of their matrimonial alliances. This liberality has been no doubt frequently practised on the Continent, more especially in France under the old *régime*, but with little success, for it never failed to excite either murmurs or sneers. It is worthy of remark, that the word *mésalliance* has no equivalent in the English language, any more than that of *parvenu*; and the idea they express is foreign to the manners of the country. Nothing, therefore, prevents the old races from renovating their blood from these new sources, and, as it were, fortifying their old castles by the admission of those middle classes, who thus obtain a direct interest in the duration and glory of the ancient edifice. The old stocks may thus stretch out their roots into a fresher soil, and

acquire a newer, a healthier, and a more brilliant life. This is the main cause of the high English nobility's having maintained an invariable dignity, always equal to itself, always distinguished for those qualities most adapted to the age in which it has lived, and to the responsibilities and duties imposed on it by times and circumstances.

But while thus initiated by their national institutions to the exercise of all civil duties, and to the profitable activity of labour in time of peace, the English nobility has never ceased to reproduce on the field of battle the valour of those renowned ancestors whose blood they inherit or whose places they supply. The heroic blood which flowed so freely on the plains of the Peninsula has again been as freely shed in the Crimea. The desperate charge of Balaklava was led by a man whose peerage is two centuries old, and who was long one of the most unpopular of the aristocrats; and in those lists of killed and wounded published by the English Government with a care so scrupulously accurate and so consolatory to families, those

who take pleasure in tracing historical genealogies have read with emotion the name of the young Earl of Errol, Hereditary Constable of Scotland under a patent dated 1315, but now only a captain of infantry, with the loss of a hand blown off in the battle of Inkermann.

But that blood which the English aristocracy showed itself so ready to shed has not disarmed its detractors. It was the same with the French Noblesse, which even in its political humiliation preserved all its hereditary valour, and had strewed with its most illustrious names all the battle fields of the Seven Years' and the American wars. It had no thanks; for when the Revolution tocsin was rung, it was enveloped in a common proscription with the monarchy, whose too docile victim it had been.

But the English Aristocracy is not satisfied with the glorious privilege to be in the first ranks of those who devote their lives under the flag of their country. They know that there are other battles to be won—formidable battles between the old and new interests,

caused by the innovations of industry and by the march of civilization; and they show themselves equal to the conflict—in the persons of many of the youngest or the most eminent of its members who enter with an intelligent solicitude into all the new questions of the times, who are sincerely alive to the wants and anxious for the moral and material improvement of the labouring classes, and deeply touched and actively preoccupied with the suffering of the indigent. When we see the most considerable men of the peerage—such men as Lord Grey, Lord Carlisle, and Lord Shaftesbury, and the heirs of the most ancient and wealthy houses, such as Lord Stanley,* Lord Goderich, and so

* The English newspapers, so little read and so badly translated in France, have all mentioned the touching scene exhibited on the 18th of August last, at the magnificent seat of the Earl of Derby at Knowsley, near Liverpool; to which all the members of the associations for the education of the working classes of the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire had received an invitation. The young Lord Stanley, eldest son of the Earl of Derby, and heir to the peerage created in 1485 to reward the man who had put the house of Tudor on the throne, did to these workpeople and to their wives the honours of the paternal seat. After having walked about the house and in the park, this young man, who is one of the most rising speakers in the

many others, devoting, not only their pecuniary subscriptions, but their personal efforts, to schools for adults and apprentices, visiting provincial towns to give lectures to workmen on history, and on all natural sciences—when we see them in their places in parliament always the first in the discussions which regard the welfare or the education of the masses—when we know how affectionately grateful the workmen, even of the manufactories, are for those marks of sympathy from above, we feel full of confidence and hope in the futurity of that great nation which redeems its imperfections by so many virtues, and which struggles against the infirmities of its position with such an intelli-

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House of Commons, made them a speech, in which he expatiated on the advantages of the association, which comprises 70 affiliated *institutes*, and which puts in circulation from village to village 250,000 volumes. After having thanked his guests in the name of his father for the honour they had done him, he ended with these noble words: "I never have gone over this old domain of my fathers, this park and these woods, without thinking that something was wanting to their beauty, their grandeur, and their picturesque solitude: that *something* was the presence of a number of human faces and of joyous voices. To-day my wishes are satisfied."

gent courage. People talk of an *oligarchy*, but let us understand the meaning of that word. Every government is an *Oligarchy* in this sense—that the number of governors is, and must always be, infinitely smaller than that of the governed. But that is just as true of republics where all the magistracies are annual as it is of monarchies where the omnipotence of one is, or affects to be, founded on the consent of all. The true question is, whether the governing Oligarchy is ephemeral or durable, stupid or intelligent, oppressive or liberal, sterile or fruitful, and, above all, whether it is accessible or inaccessible to the legitimate exertions of honour, conscience, and capacity.

Well, then, one may say without fear of contradiction that there is not, that there never has been, in the world a government where access to distinction and power is so easy and so sure as it is in England to every man who possesses talent and energy, whatever his origin, or even whatever his opinions. He will acquire them sooner than he would anywhere else, and without being obliged to

sacrifice his dignity or his convictions to the exigencies of a government, and even without the obligation of binding himself to a party. A man who has been much talked of recently, Mr. Layard, who professes himself the great adversary of the existing oligarchy, refutes his own cause by his own example. Without protection, without fortune, without belonging to the Whigs or to the Tories, after having spent some of his early years in exploring the antiquities of Nineveh, he had reached, before he is forty years of age, and having but just entered parliament, the very high position of Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which he soon resigned, but voluntarily and contrary to the wishes of two successive ministries. He probably thought that his political position gave him a right to expect something still higher; and whilst waiting for the moment, probably very near, when he will reach his mark, he enjoys a considerable popularity, and that immense notoriety which it is given to public men to attain only in representative governments.

It must be confessed that such a career does anything but confirm the complaints that the talents of unpatronised individuals are unappreciated and unrewarded by the British oligarchy.

The *administrative reform*, of which this gentleman is the champion, and which has made so much noise of late, will certainly be accomplished. This question is already decided in the minds of all enlightened men. They think of it as Wilberforce did of Parliamentary Reform at the beginning of this century. Wilberforce, the affectionate and pious friend of Pitt, said:—"I am friendly to moderate reform at a proper time. The true policy of this country is to conciliate the honest. A moderate reform would not strengthen the democrats' hands; on the contrary. But let us never hope to win the democrats; they have ideal grievances and ideal advantages; they cry for liberty, but what they want is power. The same reason which makes me condemn Grey's makes me love moderate reform: Grey's would enable democrats to carry their point, moderation

would prevent them. . . . . It is important to separate the real enemies of corruption from those who make reform a party watchword. . . Sure I am that no country was ever the worse for adhering to moral principles."*

But the administrative reform when carried will not have either the good or bad effects expected from it. The movement which develops itself under this name is the symptom of a dangerous tendency in the public mind. Formerly the number of public functionaries was much smaller than it is now. The functionaries appointed and paid by the state were comparatively few, and of little individual importance. They inspired neither esteem nor envy in the immense majority of the people, who could not look to government offices, did not want them, and were not dissatisfied that the limited number of such places should be considered the reward of the followers of the aristocracy, or of the rising men of the political world. This state of things is altered in England as it is in France.

* Life of Wilberforce, vol. ii. pp. 443, 444, vol. iii. p. 408.

The extension of education among the masses, by dislocating from humbler walks a vast number of individuals, has created so many new candidates for government offices; and on the other hand, although the slow but incontestable progress of administrative centralisation has increased the number of places to be given, it is and will always be infinitely less than that of the candidates. Both, however, are increased and increasing. This is the great peril of English society. The evil is certainly as yet not near so great as it is in the nations of the Continent; but England is already launched on that fatal slide. It is high time for her statesmen to see that a general immoderate pursuit of public office is the worst of all social diseases. It expands throughout the body of the nation a venal and servile leaven which has not the merit of correcting or excluding, even in those provided for, the spirit of faction and anarchy. It creates a hungry and greedy crowd capable of any violence to satisfy their appetite, and ready for any baseness as soon as it is satisfied. A people of place-hunters

is the lowest of people. There is no ignominy that it is not ready to undergo or to perpetrate. The true administrative reform would then consist in stopping energetically this truly democratic tendency which increases the number of employments, and substitutes agents salaried by the government, and removeable at pleasure, for duties formerly unpaid, elective, or irremoveable—which begins by extending indefinitely the influence and intervention of the ruling power, and ends by crushing it under the weight of its impatient cupidity, implacable hatreds, and impotent support. Every Englishman who regards the greatness and stability of his country should cordially unite to repel this Continental precedent—a deluge of officials, which will undermine her ancient institutions, and end in destroying her prosperity, her liberty, and her glory.

As to the reform which consists in opening a wider door to the professions in which the intervention of government is indispensable, such as the army, the navy, and diplomacy, it is one of the necessities of the times, and it will make its own way, like all useful reforms

in England, gradually and honestly. The movement in that direction will not be stopped, but checked and regulated, while partially conceded. The chief care should be not to increase the number of candidates out of proportion with that of the places to be given. But let us not blind ourselves to the fact that in the actual state of things in England the struggle is merely between two categories of younger sons—those of titled families and great landed proprietors, and those of the middle classes recently enriched. Such was the statement I heard made by a rich City merchant, whilst presiding at one of the most numerous and noisy meetings ever held on the question. He expressed himself thus before four thousand persons assembled in Drury-lane Theatre:—"A Lord was telling me a few days ago, Sir, if your reform comes to pass, what will become of our younger sons? I answered him—My Lord, if it does not come to pass, what will become of ours?" This was perfectly well understood, and immensely applauded. We see that the question turns entirely on the younger sons, for

the eldest sons have generally better things to do. There is no harm at all that the younger sons of the aristocracy, whose share of public patronage has already been much diminished, should be obliged to give themselves a little more pains than heretofore to arrive at a military commission or a diplomatic appointment. This will be effected by the recent institution of examinations and conditions of admission as preliminary steps to public employment. That will not be, any more than it has been found in France, a complete barrier against incapacity, against favouritism, against the mediocrity of heart and mind which is the scourge of the modern world; but it will certainly be a preservative against certain abuses and certain injustices which have done much more harm than good to the very classes that might expect to profit by them. But we shall not for a long time to come see in England, what has been seen some years ago in France, an old name and distinguished birth becoming an obstacle, a motive of exclusion to advancement of their possessors. With equal merit, the man

who brings to the present the *prestige* and authority of the past will always be preferred. This is all that the English Aristocracy can expect—that justice it must have, but only that.

Nothing can be of more use to the Aristocracy itself than those attacks and agitations which warn it of the necessity of being on the defensive and of maintaining itself, as well from duty as from interest, on a level with the advancing progress of the age it lives in. "We require," said lately one of its most illustrious heads—"we require every ten or fifteen years such a stroke of the whip as this to keep us in wind, and to prevent our becoming torpid in a treacherous security." The true and permanent interests of the aristocracy will, therefore, not suffer more from this administrative reform than they did from parliamentary reform, or by the abolition of the corn-laws. Its mission is not to perpetuate abuses nor to maintain privileges. The immortal Burke, in a letter to the Duke of Richmond in 1772, thus defines, in the figurative style which was familiar to him, the true character of the English patricians:—

"You," says he to the Duke, "people of great families and hereditary trusts and fortune, are not like such as I am, who, whatever we may be by the rapidity of our growth and even by the fruit we bear, and flatter ourselves that while we creep on the ground we belly into melons that are exquisite for size and flavour, yet still are but annual plants that perish with our season, and leave no sort of traces behind us. You, if you are what you ought to be, are in my eye the great oaks that shade a country, and perpetuate your benefits from generation to generation. The immediate power of the Duke of Richmond, or a Marquis of Rockingham, is not so much of moment; but if their conduct and examples hand down their principles to their successors, then their houses become the public repositories and offices of record for the Constitution —not like the Tower or Rolls Chapel, where it is searched for, and sometimes in vain, in rotten parchments under dripping and perishing walls, but in full vigour, and acting with vital energy and power, in the character of the leading men and natural interests of the country."

It is, however, a great error too frequently committed to think that the English Aristocracy consists in the four or five hundred families of which the heads have the title of Lord, and the privilege of sitting in the House of Peers: that is merely the flower, as it were, of the aristocracy; the trunk and the roots are elsewhere. If we admit that the influence of the House of Lords is diminished, it is nothing new, and proves nothing, or hardly anything, against the strength of the aristocratic element. For more than two centuries, that is to say, ever since England entered into the real exercise of a parliamentary Constitution, the House of Commons has been the preponderating force in the mechanism of the Government. It is nearly a century since the first and the greatest of the Pitts lost all his popularity and almost all his influence by accepting the peerage with the title of Earl of Chatham. The importance of the Upper House has undoubtedly been decreased since then by excessive creations, and because some of its members have lost great political power by the

abolition of the rotten boroughs of which they named the representatives. But this House remains at bottom what it has long been, and what it ought to be, the bond between the past and the present—the *living archives* of the Constitution—the image of national tradition—and at the same time a check on the sometimes too rapid movements of the machine of government. Its part remains very important; and—the reverse of Lord Chatham's case—the contemporary examples of Lord Liverpool, Lord Melbourne, and Lord Derby show that public men may become the head of the government, and remain there after having quitted the House of Commons, or even, like Lord Aberdeen, without having ever belonged to it. But, once more, it is not there that resides the vital force of the Aristocracy; and I will even go so far as to say that if the House of Lords were to be again suppressed, as it was under Cromwell, the external form of the English constitution would undoubtedly be altered in its composition, but its essence would remain the same, and, above all, its aristocratic character and

the aristocratic spirit of the nation would not be changed. The Aristocracy is everywhere powerful in England, because there is everywhere a feeling of independence and of energy, and of personal estimation, which is the essence of the aristocratic principle, the principle of nature and common sense, that gives power to those who appear to deserve it most and are found to execute it best. That is the true meaning of the word Aristocracy —*government by the best.*

We have seen at all times men of the highest rank taking the lead in popular movements, and, in return, we see the warmest advocates of plebeian interests extremely anxious to put forward any aristocratical pretension that they may happen to possess. I should like those who believe in the early disappearance of this old English spirit to hear the manner in which one of the most radical members of the present cabinet, lately dead, Sir William Molesworth, was talked of before me. "Sir," said one of the interlocutors to the other, "you forget that his family is one of the oldest in Cornwall, that he descends from one of the com-

panions of Edward I. in Palestine, and that three successive generations of his ancestors have declined the peerage."

On the other hand, everybody knows with what authority, with what general respect, Sir Robert Peel, notwithstanding the obscurity of his origin, governed the party that may be called aristocratic *par excellence*, till the day when he determined to sacrifice some material advantages of the Aristocracy to its own future interests and to those of his country.

The true strength of the English Aristocracy and nationality abides in many thousands of families of Landed Proprietors, and who, in virtue of their property, are the magistrates, and, to use our French phrase, *administrators of the country*. They do not disdain, as the old French nobility did, to accept administrative, legislative, and judicial functions. Far from it—they have almost monopolised them, and by so doing have maintained themselves at the head of all the developments of society. Men without names and without fortune often arrive at great political employment, sometimes even to the supreme management of

public affairs, just as might happen in republics or in absolute monarchies. It happens sometimes also, but with more difficulty, and rarely, that such men obtain consideration in a small or even a large town, where they may not have acquired property. But as a general rule, the higher positions, the Lords-Lieutenant, Sheriffs, and Justices of the Peace, the Grand Jurors, the Commissioners of roads, the Conservators of public edifices—in fact, all that in France is done by the salaried servants of our variable Government, which is seldom to-day what it was yesterday or will be to-morrow—all this, I say, is in England executed by the class of Country Gentlemen, who, while they continue to live at home, regulate the finances and administer justice in their respective localities, spontaneously, gratuitously, and with an admirable degree of perfection.

Independent of the Court and the Cabinet, exempt, as far as men living in society can be, from personal interests, and safe from the intrigues, affronts, and trammels of a system of centralization and *bureaucracy*,

which are everywhere the head-quarters and standing army of democracy, the English Country Gentlemen exhibit in their position, their habits, and their vigorous and useful existence, the only example of a real and influential aristocracy that Europe possesses.

All this, I think, is evident; but it is perhaps less so how this *Gentry* has had the good fortune to escape the jealousy or the hatred of those either above or below them. This success is owing to the Gentry's being, like the peerage, and still more than the peerage, accessible to all.

Every man who makes his fortune, be it in industry, commerce, the bar, or in the medical or any other profession, aspires to become a landed proprietor. He becomes so sooner or later, and then immediately begins to think, like a true Englishman, of founding a family and consolidating an estate. He thus becomes a member of that great corporation of Gentry which guides, governs, and represents the country, and which maintains its high station by unceasingly recruiting itself with all the wealth, the strength, and the abilities which are

developed from below in the course and progress of social life. After, at latest, one generation this new family is received on a perfect equality with the most ancient of the country, for it is well known that many of the most ancient houses of England, that may be traced as far back as the Norman Conquest or the Crusades, do not belong to the Peerage, which has necessarily, properly, and largely recruited from the numerous ranks of those who have distinguished themselves in more recent legal, civil, or military services to the state. No exterior distinction shows this difference of origin and antiquity between the modern and the ancient gentry—no useless title, uselessly lavished—not even that indefinable euphony of names which, with us, attaches itself to the origin of the nobility, which still constitutes its only *prestige*, and which has hitherto defied all the prohibitions and survived all the proscriptions of our incessant revolutions.

If radicalism was synonymous with liberty, if it was not, unfortunately, in England as everywhere else, the snare, the obstacle, the reef on which liberty runs the risk of being wrecked,

how could one understand its aversion to an order of things so favourable to the maintenance of the political rights of a great people, so inaccessible to the usurpations of either ministers or monarchs? Here lives, in truth, the principle of that legitimate activity, that fruitful and intelligent liberty, that the English embody in the name of *self-government*. Thanks to it, they may leave to the great public powers — the Crown and the Parliament—the plenitude of sovereign legislation, and the care of directing all higher political interests at home and abroad, without thinking themselves thereby obliged to abdicate the management of their own interests, or the profession of their own free convictions within their own proper circle, and without ceasing to keep an active and jealous eye on the general march of the Government. Thus, moreover, has been effected the marvellous alliance which combines in the minds of all Englishmen a profound respect for the rights of legal authority with the sentiment of true personal dignity and of the highest degree of individual liberty.

The large landed fortunes do not, as some fancy, and as is often repeated, prevent there being in England, as elsewhere, many small proprietors. There are vast numbers of them, known as *freeholders*, and who have in consequence the right to vote in parliamentary elections, provided they pay a small contribution, much inferior to that which is required of the farmers. Landed property is accessible to everybody in England, and, everything considered, is, on the whole, cheaper than in France. But the English system has a double advantage: on one hand the laws of inheritance prevent a ruinous subdivision of the soil and an indefinite increase of small proprietors, while on the other the small proprietors are not incited to any political opinions antagonistic to those of the great proprietors, round whom they, as it were, naturally group themselves, generally adopting their ideas, passions, and quarrels, willing and even proud to be their active, intelligent, and voluntary clients. Here is then an Aristocracy constituted on the most solid basis, that of services rendered to the public, and

of the permanent exercise of an independent, and till these days uncontested authority. It has preserved all that Aristocracy could and ought to preserve, since the invention of gunpowder and the maintenance of regular armies have deprived it of the exclusive privilege of fighting for the community. It has remained free and powerful. How has it escaped the fate of Continental aristocracies, the unpopularity, the degradation which have become the common lot of the nobility in almost all the other nations of Europe? This is what we shall try to explain.

The English Aristocracy has escaped political prostration and royal despotism by the honest and courageous exercise of parliamentary government. It has escaped because it has understood that other arms than the sword and other resources besides the intrigues and the rivalry of the court were required to resist the encroachments of monarchy. It has saved itself by invoking and exerting the powers of right and of reasoning —the conflict of thought and speech—while at the same time it studied and cultivated

with an indefatigable solicitude the general interests, commerce, agriculture, manual industry, and arts, through the medium of the individual responsibility of its representatives exercised in the free and public discussions of parliament.

Thus jealous of and guarded against royal encroachment, it has not been less wise in its relations with the people. There it has shown equal equity and foresight, and we love to see and acknowledge in its long prosperity one of the rewards so rarely granted in this world to justice and prudence. It renounced in good time all the rights, the dues, the suits and services, the privileges that were necessary and beneficial consequences of the feudal system in the middle ages, but which had lost that double character in the transformations of modern society.

When and how was this salutary renunciation performed? By what law has the English *gentleman* ceased to be a separate and exclusive class, to have privileged jurisdictions, to be authorised to require from his inferiors onerous and humiliating obligations, and to impose

upon his vassals burdens advantageous only to himself? This we don't know. Certainly there is no problem in history more worthy of study and of greater interest to the learned and the politician. I recommend it to them, and I wonder that it has not become before this the object of special researches. He who, following through the course of ages the relations existing in England between great property and its tenants, comparing them with the fatal dissensions of the nobility and the agricultural classes on the Continent—he who could do such a thing would write one of the most beautiful and most useful pages in the history of the world.

But this much is certain, that ever since the great revolts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which were personified in Wat Tyler and Jack Cade, there has never been seen in the history of England any trace of the rising of the lower classes against the higher. It is equally certain that while the French *Noblesse*, after having sacrificed to the monarch its own dignity and independence, obstinately maintained that oppressive and

superannuated system which fell to pieces on the night of the 4th August, 1789, the English nobility—the *Gentry*—had two centuries before released its rural population and delivered itself from the yoke of those fatal anachronisms. What was the result? Why, that England, having effected her revolution a century and a half before us—when the Long Parliament raised against the Crown that insurrection which led to a temporary republic—not only were the first noblemen in the land at the head of the parliamentary armies,* but the peasantry fought with and for their lords. Nowhere was there seen any symptom of a popular movement against the aristocracy, against its property, or its rights. Deprived for a time of its official power by the suppression of the House of Peers, the English nobility nevertheless maintained its ascendency in the hearts of the people. The *cavaliers* retired to their estates, where they lived loved and respected by their neighbours,

* For instance, the Earls of Stamford, Essex, Manchester, Warwick, Northumberland, and Bedford.

tenants, and dependents. And why? Because not only then, but long before, there was in England no such thing as serfs and vassals; no Englishman was the subject or the *legal* inferior of any other Englishman; no field was burdened with oppressive dues; no industry was hampered by humiliating restrictions.

Hence has proceeded, in my opinion, the immense superiority of the English aristocracy; here is the legitimate foundation of its influence. Let others speak of its splendour, its talents, its courage, its eloquence, its political genius, and they will say only the truth; but, as for me, I admire and honour above all this aristocracy, for having so much earlier and better than the rest of Europe appreciated its duties to its inferiors without having been driven to do so by the dictates of a despot or by an insurrection of the people, and all with so little noise or parade, that scarcely can we trace in the history of England the footsteps of such a prodigious and happy revolution.

We had formerly in France a social *régime*

in which some men were everything and others nothing—a *régime* by which, to gratify the pride of a few, we humiliated the many. We thought to remedy this state of things by inventing a *régime* in which no individual whatever is of any account, but all are equally abased. England alone has created and for centuries maintained a social system which oppresses and humiliates no one, and permits every Englishman to walk erect, and to say for himself, as well as the King, *Dieu et mon droit!*

This is the secret of the love that the English people bear to their history. That history no doubt calls to mind many crimes, many misfortunes, but it records no systematic humiliation, none of those fatal divisions of caste, the recollection of which—taken advantage of with such blind hatred by some, and with such perfidious ability by others—lasts for ages, and condemns innocent generations to discord, impotence, and slavery. Hence arises in Englishmen that true patriotism which rests on their respect for their ancestors, their veneration for ancient customs, and the

memory of the past, which no one thinks of calumniating or repudiating.

Such is also the reason of the affectionate veneration which the rural population entertain for the landed aristocracy. Daily in contact one with another, these two classes live in the best intelligence; and this, let it be well understood, is the strongest safeguard of England against revolutions, and the true bulwark of her constitution against the encroachments of democracy. So long as the agricultural classes in a country are not pervaded with the revolutionary spirit, its victories are but ephemeral, and have no root whatever. The democratic revolution, long prepared in France by absolute power, has definitely triumphed there only by identifying its cause with that of the rural masses, whose rights were annulled, whose burdens were excessive, and who felt themselves still more wounded in their moral pride than even in their material interests by the obstinate maintenance of a superannuated legislation.

There is not yet in England on this point

any sign of dissension or of serious dissatisfaction. It is not certain that even now the working classes do not ask in their hearts whether the Aristocracy be not their natural ally against the abuses of industrialism. By making the best use of its *prestige*—by renouncing in time divisions and distinctions formerly useful and fruitful, but now obsolete, in order to concentrate its solicitude and its efforts on the more important social questions, the English aristocracy (of which many of its members have already taken this line) would probably acquire the first place in the esteem and the confidence of the working masses. However that may be, the career is open, and the prize will be awarded to the most zealous and the most deserving.

But, as to the rural classes, no doubt on that point as yet exists. Even supposing that a revolution should make itself master of the towns and put arms in the hands of all the workmen of the manufactories, it would meet an insurmountable resistance in the robust, energetic, and loyal populations of the country. These would follow and fight for their land-

lords, who not only administer amongst them benevolent protection and impartial justice, but who also are in command of the militia and the yeomanry—a kind of national guard, infantry and cavalry—almost exclusively supplied by the agricultural districts. Add to this the active participation of the *gentry* in the savings-banks, in the benefit-societies, in all the works and associations directed towards the welfare, physical and moral, of the cultivators of the soil, and one will see that all is organized by mutual obligations, that the patrons are never likely to be found wanting to their clients nor the clients to their patrons.

SECTION VII.

ON THE LAW OF ENTAILS.

BUT if a precocious equity, a humane and paternal influence have acquired for the English aristocracy a true ascendency over the rural populations, one must not mistake the most effective cause and instrument of its power. This instrument is the right of primogeniture derived from the liberty of bequeathing, and having for result the indivisibility of the landed property of families. This is the true palladium of English Aristocracy, and consequently of the liberty of English society, such as they have existed to this day.

God forbid that I should identify everywhere political liberty with the right of primogeniture, and enchain the future liberties of the Continent to the maintenance or the re-establishment of this or that order of succession! But, whether they will or not,

those who admire and envy English liberty must understand the conditions under which only that liberty can last. They would, however, be greatly in the wrong who fancy that they see in this institution, such as it exists in England, an exclusive guarantee for the nobility such as were the majorats in France and in Spain, and the *fidéi-commis* in Germany. Assuredly the great ancient and illustrious families of England, those especially which compose the peerage, require this condition, and take advantage of it. But that is the least advantage of this great system. It creates the *esprit de famille* and the solidity of landed property far beyond the narrow circle of the high nobility and in *every* class of society, for every father of a family, whether the creator or inheritor of his property, can create an entail without any authorisation or intervention on the part of the Government.

Thus it gives effect to the wish so natural to all mankind to direct the transmission and secure the integrity and duration of property —the wish and the right not only of one

class, but of the whole nation, at least of all that part of the nation which has either inherited or by its labour and intelligence acquired property. It is thus that it has become not a distinction of *caste*, but a popular and national institution. It is not a privilege, but a right born of general liberty, and common to all classes of society.

The right of primogeniture is, as every one knows, the offspring of the liberty to make a will — a liberty always respected in truly free nations, such as were the Romans, and such as are now the English and the Americans.* While the French law, making no account of the will of the father or the tra-

* M. de Tocqueville, in his celebrated work on Democracy in America, observes that in the United States the legislation of most of the States admits of entails, and gives full liberty to dispose by will of properties not entailed. Equal division does not exist but for successions *ab intestat*. It is the contrary of what is practised in England, where, concerning landed properties, the land which has not been disposed of by will goes all to the eldest son. Equal division exists for chattels. In the two countries the right of making a will is the corrective of the dispositions of the law; but in France this corrective is an illusion, for the law, as is well known, prohibits entails, and renders a will superfluous, leaving to the father but the right to give to one of his children a small advantage purely personal and for life.

44910

ditions of the family, peremptorily imposes the equality of share and the indefinite division of inheritances, the English law only interferes in case of intestacy, and then it makes the eldest son the exclusive proprietor of the landed property; but it leaves entire liberty to the father of the family, if not restricted by settlement or entail, to dispose by will of his property as he shall choose. Let us add that every Englishman makes a will. It is a civil right that he would reproach himself for not exercising. To learn how popular and natural this system is, we must not study the practice of it in the great and ancient families, which, inheriting from former possessors, feel especially bound to pay their debt to the future. Let us take the daily and universal example of a monied man, whether a successful tradesman or manufacturer, who has invested all, or almost all, his accumulations in landed property. Such a man is entirely the author and master of his own fortune, of which he got nothing by succession or entail.

Now what do we every day see him do?

His first thought, on becoming a landed proprietor, is to create a future and durable patrimony for the family he has founded. He wishes, above all, to perpetuate in it the possession of the land which he has acquired, and to secure to his posterity the fruits of his industry and of his talents. There is not in this any aristocratic feeling, in the sense that is generally attached to the word. It is that natural, domestic, and social feeling which has been and still is at the root of all human society—the love of durability and an aspiration towards futurity. It is for this that he selects his eldest son, if he has one, and favours him, not from a motive of personal partiality or vanity, but to create a head of a family to replace himself, when he shall have departed, and to preserve to the paternal hearth a patrimonial domain, and both of his own foundation. This advantage that he gives his eldest son is not to be for his eldest son alone. By means of an entail he spreads his care over two generations. The modern laws which have limited the power of entails do not allow him to do more, but this suf-

fices. He has deposited in the bosom of this new family the germs of durability, of increase, of permanence, and of stability; he has guarded the future prospects of his family from the negligence or prodigality of an individual successor; he has provided for the integral transmission of property merely personal, of connections, establishments, and enterprises of agriculture, of industry, and of commerce; he knows, or at least he hopes, that his grandson will continue or repeat what he himself has done, and this hope is seldom disappointed. The power given by modern legislation to the usufructuary and, when of age, the remainder man, to agree to cut off the entail, has as yet impaired in no serious degree these traditional customs. We have seen, in the highest ranks of the peerage, some fathers loaded with debts take advantage of this mode of cutting off entails, to obtain or extort from their sons, at the moment that these were coming of age, the sacrifice of the brilliant fortune which had been settled upon them, and thus throw into the abyss of their individual prodigality the

accumulated wealth of many generations; but we see also innumerable instances in which new entails are created by the free will and provident care of those on whose decease they would be likely to expire.

The frequent expiries and renewings of entails under the existing laws afford the old families convenient opportunities of rectifying abuses, and of preventing the inconvenience likely to ensue from too great an accumulation of property in one person. It affords also the means of making a provision for younger children, which in every generation tends to distribute or share the common fund originally entailed. What astonishes a Frenchman in the application of this system is the union and harmony of families, quite as great in England as it is with us—the absence of that jealousy which is excited in France by the slightest advantage given to one child in preference to another, even within the narrow limits assigned to the parents by the civil code—a jealousy legitimate enough when we consider the exclusively personal and transitory character of this privilege; so that the

parent who exercises it seems to mark an unjust degree of affection for one child rather than another.

Even in England it may be doubted whether this perfect and universal resignation of younger sons to such a state of things will last for ever.

But it now exists and works in general so happily and harmoniously, that the new men, founders of new families, readily adopt this feudal practice of the aristocracy and apply it to the occasions and exigencies of modern society. In a word, the landed patrimony of every English family, whether old or new, is regarded and called an *estate*, that is a *stability*, in which the younger branches take a kind of pride, almost rivalling that of the senior possessor; the idea of subdividing it appears to them as strange, wild, and unpractical as appears to us that of the division of royalty between the sons of Clovis. Thus the English are satisfied to correct by the prudent and affectionate exercise of the right of entail, what would be too absolute and exclusive in the unmitigated right of primogeniture.

I do not here pretend to treat the question of the *morcellement* of landed property by its equal division amongst children. I know the strength of the principle that the *Code Napoléon* has deposited in the heart of France, and which has the advantage of deriving more strength from its antagonists than its advocates. Though it imposes on one of the most precious and natural liberties of mankind a yoke unknown till our days, it has had the advantage of being opposed by the enemies of modern liberty. It has been questioned under the Restoration by statesmen who had allowed themselves to be considered the adversaries of liberal ideas and institutions. It is questioned to this day by a school which indulges daily in the most provoking attacks against every manifestation of human independence. Such an opposition is with me the main recommendation of this principle. But it yet remains to it to be discussed and tested on the broader ground of liberty, and by a sober inquiry whether such an incessant mobility and infinite divisibility of property can offer a sufficient guarantee, on the

one hand to the *esprit de famille* and agriculture, and on the other, to the durability and the dignity of modern society.* It is still to be proved whether the indefinite subdivision of inheritances, and the dissolving effect of equal distribution, are not the most efficacious instruments ever invented by despotism to crush all resistance, and pulverize all the collective or individual powers of a people.†

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* It is impossible not to mention here the remarkable examination of this question by M. Plaz, Chief Engineer of Mines, in his important work, 'Les Ouvriers Européens,' 1855, pp. 223, 251, 286. He proves that the law which gives to each heir, in opposition to the will of the father of the family and of the co-heirs, the right of parcelling out the inheritance, is in fact the greatest obstacle in the way of that creation of small properties that the Code Napoléon seemed to aim at. As to the agricultural point of view, one must read and re-read the book of M. Léonce de Lavergne on the *Economie Rurale* of England, in which facts speak with such convincing eloquence.

† Hear what the great master in the art of despotism advises one of his pupils, King Joseph:—"Establish our *Code Civil* at Naples: it will destroy all that does not attach itself to you in a few years. That is the great advantage of the *Code Civil*. . . . You must establish the *Code Civil* amongst you. It will consolidate your power; for by it all that is not entailed soon falls to pieces. This is the consideration that makes me preach up the *Code Civil*, and led me to establish it in France."—*Napoleon to Joseph, 5th June*, 1804.

But at all events, one thing is certain, that the political liberty of England rests on the contrary principle. The stability of landed property, guaranteed by the right of bequeathing and entailing, is the palladium of English society—the double bulwark which has defended it up to this hour against the usurpations of the monarch and the irruption of demagogues. Thanks to this institution, self-respect is blended with that which is felt for one's ancestors under shelter of the paternal roof: the spirit of liberty finds in every ancient mansion a stronghold of durability and resistance to change. It has rooted itself in a soil which has not yet lost, as it has done elsewhere, its distinguishing title of a *reality*, and become what the English call a chattel—a mere personal and ephemeral possession, which may be cut and carved till its fragments become a kind of currency, a sort of clumsy money, which by-and-by, with the help of notaries and schedules, may circulate like bills of exchange or checks *payable to the bearer*.

Et majores vestros et posteros cogitate! This is what every Englishman ought to read on the front of his ancestral home, to remind him of the proud independence his fathers enjoyed there, and for which he is in his turn accountable to his posterity. Thus it is that under the paternal roof—under the shade of the trees planted by their ancestors, grow up and pass the calm and inflexible lives of those noble and pure races, which are personified in the *Country Gentleman*—the *civis agricola* of England!

There it is that he learns that quiet pride—that independence respectful to others and satisfied in itself—that attitude neither rude nor servile—of all of which he is a pattern. It is there that are developed the tranquillising sensations of comfort, competence, and stability, which are the foundation of the internal quiet and prosperity of states—the happiness of feeling himself in his proper place and in his proper rank, because that rank and place are determined and guaranteed, as far as the uncertainty of human

affairs permits, against the risks—the perpetual proximity to ruin, which, under a despotism or under a democracy, threatens every class of society.

These happy dispositions of private and rural life reflect themselves on political life, and have almost always inspired the public men of England—those of the highest as well as of the inferior ranks—with an equally strong feeling of public duty and of personal dignity.

We are told that Napoleon, soon after his arrival at St. Helena, while discussing the position of the great Captain who had conquered him and the career which such a victory might open to his ambition, allowed these words to escape him :—"*Now we shall see what Wellington will do!*" Napoleon, ruminating on his own headlong, adventurous career—on the fortunes he had made and destroyed—on his habit of gambling with the rights and consciences of others as he did with his own, was unable to understand that an Englishman, even when arrived at the

summit of glory and popularity, could have been satisfied with quietly remaining in his proper place, with doing his duty in parliament and to his country, taking in the debates of the former that share which was expected from his age, services, and wisdom, and finding in the cultivation and improvement of a patrimonial property, such as Wellington founded at Strathfieldsaye, the inter-sessional occupation and solace of his old age, and the future dignity and security of his successors!

Nor should we leave out of our calculation the moral effects of such a life on the generous faculties of the mind, in the formation of great characters, and in the training of men's hearts to a devotion to one's country worthy of history. When circumstances shall require it—when the hour of the great struggle shall have struck, it is from the bosom of the rural communities of the Anglo-Saxon race that will emerge the chiefs predestinated to authority, to responsibility, and to glory. The two men who bear the purest names in the history of modern liberty, who are the types *par excellence* of the patriot, the true liberal;

the honest man—Hampden and Washington, were English *country gentlemen*.*

We may come to the conclusion, for the instruction of other nations, that the liberty of entailing and settling property is at once the consequence and the guarantee of general liberty. This is perfectly well understood by those writers amongst us who, in the spirit of Napoleon's advice to Joseph, are advocates at once of absolute monarchy and the *Code Civil*. Nor should it ever be forgotten by their antagonists who still remain faithful to liberal principles and hopes, that the right of primogeniture—that is to say, a check on the indefinite subdivision of the land by a power of bequest—is repugnant only to despotism. Nor is it a right inherent in, or confined to, an aristocracy. It would adapt

* Thanks to M. Guizot and to his son-in-law, M. de Witt, we are in France sufficiently acquainted with the life and correspondence of Washington not to be surprised to see him recorded amongst the glorious names of the England that he defeated: he was certainly a thorough-bred Englishman, and just as much an aristocrat as any lord of his time or of ours. We have amongst us plenty of dealers in paradox, but the most audacious of them would not venture to pass Washington on us for a democrat.

itself perfectly to a wise and well-organised democracy. It would give it strength and stability by conciliating it with the best instincts of our nature, as also with the best interests of property itself.

When the English determined to seal the subjection of Ireland, they decreed by a law of 1701, that *the landed properties of all deceased Papists should be divided equally amongst their sons*, unless the eldest became a Protestant, in which case he would become the exclusive heir at the death of his father. (2 Anne, chap. vi., sect. 10 and 12.)

When they began to repent of their long iniquity towards their victim, the first act of the gradual emancipation of the Catholics was to abrogate that law in 1778, and thus to re-establish for the Irish *Papists* the dignity and independence of property.

Such then is, and such ought to be, the ruling principle, not, we repeat, of the aristocracy only, but of all landed property. As long as this legislation shall remain, as long as it shall suffer no other change than may be necessary to correct abuses, and thus ren-

der it more perfect, we may be re-assured as to the fate of England. The Revolutionary storm will be no serious danger to her till that fatal day, if ever it should come, when her public opinion shall declare itself against entails and primogeniture. Then and then only England will have taken the first step on that steep descent which precipitates nations, through the shocks of revolutions, into the abyss of despotism.

There has been as yet but one precursive symptom of it—the proposition made last year to the House of Commons, by Mr. Locke King, to obtain an inquiry into the law of successions. This proposition, rejected by a considerable majority, does not seem to have found an echo, nor to have left any serious trace. But it is a presage that foreseeing men and sincere friends of liberty in England will do well not to lose sight of, for it is through that *sap* that the enemies will enter the place.

SECTION VIII.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

As to parliamentary reform, that of twenty-five years ago, as well as that one which will probably be attempted as soon as peace shall be made, it will not essentially alter the present state of things in England. The greatest inconvenience of the reform of 1830 is that of rendering access to the House of Commons more difficult to some young men of merit and of expectations who used formerly to get in (like Burke, Fox, and Pitt) by the favour of an independent proprietor of a borough, but who now-a-days can attain that object only by devoting themselves to the interests of the Government or to the passions of the Opposition, or by striving to acquire at any price a degree of notoriety seldom compatible with the reserve, the dignity, and the real independence of a public man.

It has been thence inferred that the level of the House of Commons has lowered since that reform. It may be so. It was nevertheless right and necessary to get rid of the scandal of those rotten boroughs, and to re-establish a just proportion between the representation of the old agricultural and the new industrial interest in Parliament. This reform has been but a consequence of the increase of labour and wealth which manifested itself in the towns and the manufacturing districts of the country. In a moral and political point of view, we may deplore that increase; but from the moment that it became an acknowledged fact, policy required that it should be dealt with.

It would have been the height of injustice and imprudence to refuse to the populations and the monied interests created by the development of mechanical labour, and especially in the coal districts, their proportionate share in the national representation. This share has not been exceeded, for at the same time that these new elements were admitted to the enjoyment of the electoral franchise,

the old and vital elements of public power were reinforced by increasing the number of farmer-electors, and above all of the members for counties—that is to say, of the landed property. This latter interest has therefore still the preponderance in a system from which fortunately no portion of the national strength, no class of interests, of rights, or of wants are excluded. Let us observe, moreover, that it has required fifty years of efforts to obtain this result.* The small number of electoral boroughs may still be reduced, but it will not be so without giving a proportionate equivalent to the agricultural representation; and as long as this proportion is preserved, nothing will have been fundamentally changed or shaken; but it would be a different case if the democracy should succeed in altering the present proportion by taking *population* for the only basis—in delivering over a preponderance of representation to the unsettled, over-excitable, and demoralised populations of the

* The second Pitt made his first speech on electoral reform in 1782, and the reform was only voted in Lord Grey's ministry, on the proposition of Lord John Russell, in 1831!

towns—or, still worse, in assuming as the only or even main foundation of national representation the delusions and extravagances of universal suffrage. Then indeed there would be a sure and early end of the Parliament and of the existing England, but let us hope that for this we have long to wait. We may conclude that, as at present constituted, Parliament still is what it was—the great council of a great people, where no doubt every passion and every prejudice have the right of sitting and voting, but where the undeniable danger they present is met by the remedial opposition and counterbalance of all the strength, the intelligence, and independences of the wise and manly race that compose the majority. Up to this time, all the real wants and even wishes of the country have been freely represented; and all its serious interests wisely ponderated, reconciled, and secured. No other form of government has ever given to man more opportunities of accomplishing all that is just and reasonable, or more facilities for avoiding error and for correcting it.

What more is there to be desired? To preserve this admirable instrument from either rust or self-derangement is the simple dictate of wisdom,—to attempt to break or transform it would be the height of ingratitude and folly.

But let us leave for a moment these speculations as to the future, to cast a look on the spectacle of the present life of the Palace of Westminster.

SECTION IX.

THE PARLIAMENT.

I SHOULD think meanly, I admit, of the heart and judgment of the man who could approach without emotion that palace of the English Parliament—that temple of history and eloquence, of law and liberty. I cannot tread its floor without a feeling of reverence. It is more sacred a thousand times than that of the Pnyx at Athens or of the Forum at Rome; for it has been for a thousand years the political and legislative sanctuary of a Christian people, and the cradle of the liberties of the modern world.

There for many centuries the rights and dignity of Man have victoriously struggled against the absolute power and the omnipotence of One. There has been knocked to pieces the humiliating theory of an Autocracy. There was achieved the triumph of that re-

gulated and disciplined liberty which implies and maintains a due respect for necessary authority, and which is so well expressed by the English phrase *the liberty of the subject.* There have been tried, in our days, the most noble causes that the human voice has ever been called upon to defend—the cause of liberty and humanity against the Revolution, pleaded and gained by the genius of Burke and Pitt,—the cause of the poor negro slave against the cruel egotism of colonial industry, pleaded and gained by the intrepid and persevering virtue of Wilberforce,—the cause of the Irish and English Catholics against three centuries of prejudices and persecution, pleaded and gained by the burning eloquence of O'Connell and Shiel; lastly, the cause of the workman and the poor against the blindness of the great landed interest, pleaded and gained by the manly good sense of Peel.

There at least human speech will not be accused of sterility or impotence. There, no doubt, as everywhere else, men have been occasionally carried away by strange delusions and fatal violence; and there, no

doubt, error and untruth have too often had, and still, even now, have a most mischievous influence. The truth has never long remained unvindicated. Justice is, if not always acted upon, at least always listened to; and right has generally triumphed over strength by the arms of eloquence and of reason.

The edifice answers to the majesty of its destination. It is certainly the most magnificent product of the renaissance of architecture in the nineteenth century. One might wish for a less florid style and a less monotonous profusion of decoration in this splendid edifice. One regrets that the architect was not inspired by the noble simplicity of Westminster Abbey rather than its too immediate neighbour, Henry VII.'s Chapel, or the *flamboyant* style of the old cloister of the canons of St. Stephen. He has done well to preserve the latter in the centre of his modern work, but he might have dispensed with making it the type and the dominant style of the regenerated palace; in spite, however, of these overwrought details, the *ensemble* is incom-

parable. That enormous mass of perforated tracery—that forest of pinnacles, battlements, and buttresses—that profusion of sculpture outside and inside—those colossal towers—those innumerable turrets—the *façade* on the Thames with the two terraces, washed by the great river, which seems to bring to the feet of the national legislature the tribute of the maritime and commercial greatness of England—all this does well deserve the expressive cry of admiration which, even before it was terminated, it elicited from the Emperor Nicholas, "*But this is a dream in stone!*" *

You enter, and you feel almost crushed by the immensity of the old *Westminster Hall*, which, with its massive timber roof, supported on hammer-beams carved in the figure of angels, forms, as it were, the vestibule of

* Sir Charles Barry, the author of the plan selected by competition in 1835, will probably have the honour to finish it, for there only remain the two principal towers to terminate. He has, however, availed himself of the help, for the ornamental part, of the talent of the Catholic architect, Pugin, whose career was interrupted by a premature death, but not before he had arrived at the first place in his art, by the forty Catholic churches raised by his means or from his designs on the emancipated soil of England.

the whole palace. This hall is supposed to be the largest in Europe, and the boldest in the construction of its roof, which rests only on the lateral walls. It is there that was celebrated, up to 1820, the feudal banquet which terminates the ceremony of the Coronation of the kings of England, during which banquet a Champion armed *cap à pie*, accompanied by the Master of the Horse and the Earl Marshal, used to enter on horseback and throw down his gauntlet to whoever should have the temerity to contest the king's right to the crown which he had just received on the tomb of Edward the Confessor.

There also have been tried all the great political causes which give such a special character to English history, from that of King Charles I. to that of Queen Caroline in 1820; and above all, it is there that the case of Warren Hastings absorbed for fifteen years all the marvellous eloquence of Burke, Pitt, Fox, and Sheridan. Such a hall is worthy of being the *propylæum* of parliamentary grandeur.

Ascending a flight of steps that lead out of the hall to the two Houses, we see on either hand the statues of the statesmen, magistrates, ministers, and other eminent persons who have done the greatest honour to the English name. In going through the principal door you pass between Falkland and Hampden, the two heroes of the great civil war—the honest, conciliatory, and disinterested Royalist—the intrepid, modest, and chivalrous Parliamentarian—reconciled in death, and united in glory by the common admiration of a grateful posterity. Elsewhere and everywhere some fresco paintings (which it must be confessed might be better), representing subjects exclusively taken from history, or national poetry, instead of the mythological and stupid allegories which preside over the legislative deliberations of the Luxembourg and the Palais Bourbon.

Nothing can be more touching, nothing more appropriate to their destination than the two chambers where the Houses sit, which are opposite to each other, at the extremities of a cruciform corridor, the immense height

of which excites astonishment. The House of Lords is a splendid object. In point of art and taste it cannot be said to be irreproachable, but it surpasses in magnificence and beauty all the analogous edifices in Europe.

The celebrated tapestries which represented the defeat of the Spanish Armada by the fleet of Queen Elizabeth, and which were destroyed by fire in 1835, have been replaced by windows of painted glass representing the kings and queens of England. Between the windows are the statues of the barons who imposed Magna Charta on King John in 1215: clad in their coats of mail, and leaning on their swords and their armorial shields, they seem to cast a look, at once austere and fraternal, on their descendants seated below them, and to whom they have transmitted the inestimable inheritance of liberty and honour. Heraldry is everywhere introduced to explain and illustrate history. The coats of arms of the great Justiciaries, ever since the Norman conquest, with their names and the date of their installation, decorate with perfect propriety

the place where has always sat the highest and ultimate jurisdiction of the country.

The Lord Chancellors, who have been at all times presidents of the House of Peers, have also their history recorded in their armorial escutcheons. The name of Thomas à Becket figures there, with those of so many bishops, archbishops, and cardinals, who, like him, have occupied that illustrious position. The force of tradition, history, and true patriotism has everywhere overcome the sectarian or party spirit. In no place has *Protestantism* impressed its seal on this monument; nowhere is there seen the solution of the continuity which has separated by the Reformation the English of the sixteenth century from their glorious and invincible ancestors. Everywhere, on the contrary, the forms and memorials of Catholic art triumph; and one might reproach to the *ensemble* of the decorations trusted to the prodigious talent of the Catholic Pugin, too much affectation of an ecclesiastical character, and, for a legislative building, too much the appearance of a cathedral.

The throne where the Queen comes to open and close the annual sessions of parliament—this throne, with its dais, its candelabra, its steps of the richest and most liturgic style, appears a real altar.

Never have royalty, liberty, and history had a more splendid sanctuary.*

The effect produced by the House of Commons, more simple and more austere, would have been no less grand if it had not been indispensable to sacrifice some of its original design to the exigences of acoustics. But there also the historical and traditional character is the basis of the decorations.

The representatives of the people deliberate there, surrounded by the insignia of towns, provinces, kings, and queens, whose authority, interests, and grandeur have, after so many centuries of conflict, fused them-

* By a strange and mournful coincidence, a few steps from this room where English royalty appears in all its historical pomp, which it has alone preserved amongst all the nations of the West, is kept in a press in the library of the Lords, engrossed on parchment, the sentence of death pronounced against King Charles I., with the signatures and armorial seals of Cromwell, Ludlow, and all the other regicides.

selves into this great body, which has for so long boasted itself as being *the first assembly of gentlemen in Europe.* And there, as everywhere, on the floor as on the ceiling, under their feet and over their heads, the faithful Commons read the proud motto attached by Richard Cœur de Lion to his crown, and which sums up so well the history, the greatness, and the strength of England — *Dieu et mon droit.*

It is surrounded by all this magnificence of art and history that sits the English Parliament, deliberating with a simplicity, an ease, and a tranquillity, which are the pledge of strong and serious institutions. Nothing is affected—nothing theatrical. A few men in frocks and overcoats, with their hats on their heads, are busying themselves with the interests of the greatest empire of the universe, and with a salutary slowness make those laws which are to rule the destinies of two hundred millions of men dispersed in the five parts of the world.

They speak as they sit—*sans façon*—as impulse, or convenience, or chance directs.

This admirable simplicity is that which strikes one most in the discussions at Westminster. Every one shows himself just as he is, and stranger still, every one takes easily and at once the place that seems naturally to belong to him. Every one fills the part for which he feels himself best adapted, and for which the opinion of the House acknowledges his fitness.

There you see, on both sides of the House, the minister and the politician, properly so called—the man of business, conversant with financial and official details—the lawyer—the manufacturer, and the party leaders who on either side represent half the public opinion of England. In one man you will recognise the forlorn hope of some individual crotchet. From another you will have to undergo the tedium of elaborately prepared and dully delivered orations. In the intervals will arise a *debater*, who recalls the discussion to its proper object, replies to or confirms those who have preceded him, and conducts the debate to its logical conclusion. There is not, as in France, a prepared list of speakers; every

one speaks when he thinks proper, and this is a right that no one contests.

Ministers are too often subjected to a system of interrogatories, and too often of questions indiscreet and inopportune, which deserve and receive only evasive or derisive answers. The speeches are generally too long for our taste, and this is the great fault of their style of debate. But even this fault is the excess of qualities in which our assemblies are wholly deficient—respect for individual rights and tolerance of adverse opinions.

Sometimes one escapes by flight from too long a trial of his patience, and a clearance is soon observed round the unlucky *bore*, who abuses his privilege, especially if he forgets the exigencies of the prandial appetite or fails to observe the drowsiness of his auditors. But in general the members bear weariness as well as contradiction with admirable patience. It is not their habit to interrupt a speaker by murmurs, exclamations, or protestations against the opinions he may utter. They are aware that he got up to speak his own sentiments, and not theirs—to bring forward his

own ideas, and not those of his adversaries. These, therefore, wait patiently till their turn comes to answer him. The answer may be as sharp or as violent as they choose, but at least every one will have had an opportunity of expressing his thoughts without having had to struggle against the clamours and howlings of those who fancy that an opinion stifled and silenced by noise and tumult, is an opinion refuted and obliterated.

I have heard in England not only the great speakers whose talent might give them a special authority, but even those of the third or fourth order, maintain questions the most unpopular, nay odious, to the great majority, in a House, if not attentive, at least respectfully silent.

It is worthy of remark that the English Parliament—the arena in which one might expect hereditary rank and political eloquence to be all powerful—is by no means extensively or abusively influenced either by birth, which is the nightmare of the revolutionists, nor by eloquence, which is the bugbear of despotism.

History shows that from Walpole to Peel the greatest parts have been performed by men whose birth was inferior to that of the majority of their hearers and followers, and who would not have belonged to what is called the *Noblesse* on the Continent. And as to the abuse of the powers of speech, this native home of political eloquence is of all the countries in the world the one where *speech*, when it is but speech, has the least power. The *vox et præterea nihil* has here no chance of success. A man who is but a fine speaker is soon put in his proper place, and that place a very low one. The man of respectability or the man of business, who perhaps hesitates, stammers, or mumbles, but who speaks the language of conviction or of experience, is always preferred to him. We know that the general spirit of order and discipline that prevails in England has always imposed on the Government party, as well as on the Opposition, the necessity of an avowed chief, or as they say a *leader*, in each of the houses. His authority is often submitted to with

some individual reluctances, but it is nevertheless submitted to with docility as long as it lasts. We have seen the Ministerial party, and what is stranger still, the Opposition, led by men who were very far from being eloquent.

Neither Lord Castlereagh nor Lord George Bentinck were what can be called orators. Sir Robert Peel was not much of one—the Duke of Wellington not at all; and I do not think that Lord Palmerston has been so more than once in his life.

Their true orators often rise to eloquence, without aiming at it. They reach it insensibly, through the technical embarrassments of figures and details; but having surmounted these preliminary impediments, they attain and preserve a level of simplicity and majesty infinitely attractive and impressive. When some one endued with this talent appears, all England feels and recognises the power of human speech—the supreme type of beauty—the irresistible weapon of truth; and she gladly inscribes the new comer in

the first rank of her glories. She salutes an *orator!*—a title which the English do not prostitute as we do to every man who speaks in our parliamentary assemblies.

But parliamentary eloquence, or what we in France call *the Tribune*, has found a formidable rival in the Press.

One of the chiefs of the new Radical school has pretended to show that the present developement of the periodical press would be a sufficient substitute for political assemblies, and that the English parliament is nothing but a noisy, troublesome, and superfluous piece of machinery. In England, where everything is said boldly and without disguise, this doctrine is already avowed, and seems the precursor of future defections from the old constitutional principle. Radicalism, which hates all political guarantees, because every guarantee is an obstacle to its progress, has an instinctive desire to get rid of the parliament, which, while it opposes an equal barrier against anarchy from clubs and despotism from barracks, is also the bulwark of

order and legitimate authority, as well as of conscience and individual liberty.

Radicalism well knows, that by a sort of beneficent fascination, which exercised itself on Mirabeau as on M. Berryer, Conservative principles have in general ended in rallying the great orators.

Experience has proved in France, as in England, that the legislative majorities resulting from free debate, and guarded from exterior violence, have never failed to decide in favour of the old principles of society against all utopists and levellers. The same

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* In France at present the most extreme opinions profess a common horror of Parliamentary government. We read in the *Presse* of the 28th of December, 1855, what follows:—

"No question can ever be decided by votes: two to one or eleven to ten have never proved in any assembly, in any academy, or in any conference or congress, anything except the want of decisive truth—the absence of demonstrated certainty."

And again:—"With the constitutional system which requires deliberative assemblies where all must end in questions decided by votes between majority and minority, that might be an invincible difficulty; but it would disappear in a *rational régime, which requires but newspapers.*"

The *Univers* of the day after reproduces with solemnity part of these axioms, and adds on its own account, "Nothing can be more true," &c.

Let us hope that the absurdity of the system will at last become visible to all eyes.

experience proves, on the other hand, that the Radical and fanatic press, implacable against restricted or moderate authority, knows how to become as supple and submissive as absolute power can desire. The old and sincere friends of liberty will nevertheless remain faithful to the axiom which considers the reciprocal action of the press on the tribune, and of the tribune on the press, as the fundamental condition of the government of free countries.

Will a day ever come when a social dissolution, created by a practical democracy, and fomented by the temerities of the press, will also swallow up the parliament of England? Shall we see there also a mob of savages, led by actors and mountebanks, invade these splendid seats to violate at once the majesty of this sanctuary and the liberty which it represents? Or will another Cromwell arise to order a picket of soldiers to turn out of doors those mutinous babblers? It may be so; but not yet. None of our contemporaries are destined for such a triumph or such a shame.

SECTION X.

THE SCHOOLS AND THE UNIVERSITIES.

BUT there is in England a spectacle still greater than that of her parliament, as it is a surer guarantee for the old English society than even the representative government. We mean the establishments for public instruction. Too much has been said of parliamentary life—not enough of those training-schools of public men which are the feeders and supports of the former. We have borrowed from England a likeness more or less faithful of its political institutions; but it has not been given to any modern nations to furnish any imitation, however poor, of her Schools and Universities.

It is known that under the modest name of *schools*, three or four large establishments, amongst which Eton * and Harrow † occupy

* Founded by King Henry VI. in 1441.
† Founded by John Lyon in 1585.

the first place, receive, almost without exception, the children of all the more affluent families of the country, and give them an education at once classical and manly, under the direction of a few eminent members of the Anglican clergy. They differ essentially from the analogous institutions of France by two characters—their antiquity and their situation in the country. Identified, we may say, by their date with the history of the nation, the first instruction they afford to their pupils is the memory of the great men who have preceded them on these school forms that they quitted to occupy those higher benches at Westminster, where they presided over the destinies of the greatest empire under the sun.

A collection of busts and of portraits presents to the young inhabitants of the place the features of those of their predecessors whose names have adorned the annals of England, or who still perhaps occupy the first place in the attention of their contemporaries. Most of these are represented young, such as they were when the first rays of

glory illumined their brows, or when their new-born renown created a wish for a memorial of their former residence: this juvenile appearance—this *qualis eram*—seems to be another link between them and their successors.

The having placed at a salutary distance from the metropolis or the neighbourhood of large towns these great centres of education, has been an all-important advantage. The love of the English for rural life is well known, as well as the beneficial influence that it exerts over them. Nothing then can be more natural than their having placed the centres of their national education in the country; nor can anything tend more usefully to the developement both of the moral and physical qualities of youth. It is difficult to conceive a spot better suited to exercise a happy influence and lasting impression on the *élite* of the sons of a great nation than Eton, for example.

The lodgings of the masters and pupils form a large and handsome edifice, built in the semi-Gothic style, which suits so well the manners and the ideas of the country. The

chapel, worthy of being a cathedral, is one of the finest specimens of the English architecture of the fifteenth century.

Opposite to it, and on the other side of the Thames, is Windsor Castle, the home of royalty, with its huge Round Tower, built by William the Conqueror, and its St. George's Chapel, all covered with the arms of the Knights of the Garter since Edward III.

Around the school are wide meadows, bounded by the windings of the Thames, which form as it were a park of lawns and groves, as far as the eye can see. But the pupils are not confined to their play-ground; they pour out at all hours into the surrounding country, and in the neighbouring towns and villages; except during the school hours, they do pretty much what they like, and very rarely abuse this liberty, which appears so strange to us. Unwatched by any special superintendent, with no restrictions but those imposed by certain traditional customs and by that self-respect which every Englishman is so early taught, they thus begin their apprenticeship of public life and of self-

government, as their fathers and ours did in the schools of the middle ages.*

The number of studious and successful scholars is not greater probably than in our *Lycées* — perhaps less; but the study of ancient languages is with some carried very high, and is popular with all. Moreover, in the mass of these children, life, health, and

* M. Charles Lenormant, in his work on *l'Enseignement des Langues Classiques*, has perfectly explained the change which took place in the 16th century in the discipline of our public schools, and which received its definitive character from Napoleon I. What happened to the political institutions happened also to them. The legitimate fear inspired by the Reformation excited everywhere compression and restriction, and substituted a terrified, and often powerless, authority, for confidence, independence, and spontaneity. No price could be too great for the maintenance of the Catholic faith and unity; but we must regret that England, in losing these treasures, should have been the only country able to keep the Catholic institutions founded by the middle ages. "It is difficult," says M. Lorain, ex-Rector of one of our colleges, in a work that we shall mention hereafter, "to have lived long in our *colleges* without thinking that the minds which are so compressed for ten years, and that at an age when nature requires expansion and spontaneity, get stunted and soured, that all their energies are concentrated in a hatred of rule and of authority which bursts out, and we know with what violence, in after life, when they pass from such a servile state to uncontrolled liberty. If we had to found a *college*, it would be desirable to begin by trying to change the *barrack life* by which it was the Emperor's policy to prepare our children for nothing but a *regimental life*."

intelligence overflow with a sort of expansive and respectful serenity, which is not met with among the pupils of our scholastic barracks. What a difference between such a residence and the houses in which we were doomed to pass our educational days—gloomy prisons, blocked up between two streets of Paris, surrounded on all sides by the roofs and chimney pots of the neighbouring houses, with two rows of sickly trees struggling for life in a courtyard, paved or gravelled, and our only recreation a miserable walk once a-week or fortnight through the *guinguettes* of the faubourgs!

And yet one sees no rudeness or low manners in these young people, thus early emancipated. On certain gala days the older boys figure in court dresses before the Royal Family and the aristocracy, and declaim some Greek, or Latin, or English speeches, with an ease and a simplicity of good taste that practised orators might envy.

But to form a just opinion of the anticipated manliness of these children of liberty, as well as of the general and energetic

vitality of the superior classes in England, we must see these boys during their play-hours, under the shade of their great trees; we shall then understand the saying of the Duke of Wellington, when he returned in the decline of his days to this beautiful spot, where he had been brought up—recollecting the plays of his youth, and finding the same precocious vigour in the descendants of his old playmates and friends, he exclaimed aloud—"*It is here that the battle of Waterloo was won!*"

If we pass from the *Schools* to the *Universities*, we see still more clearly the tie which binds education to public life, and the roots through which the old British institutions draw their robust strength from the unceasingly renewed sources of fresh generations. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge are, in my opinion, the real wonder of England. It is through them that pass all the Anglican clergy, the heirs to the peerage and greater properties, the lawyers, men of letters, and politicians. Thither the father of a family, enriched by trade, industry, or literature,

hastens to send his sons. There, therefore, it is, that the *directing*—the governing class of the country, is almost exclusively formed. In the list of *honours*—that is, the highest places obtained at the academical examinations, ever since 1802, which are recorded by each university—we find many of the greatest names that England can now boast. This list, annually published in the newspapers, is looked for by the whole nation with a lively interest; and an honour thus obtained confers on the parties during their whole lives a universally acknowledged distinction.* Here it is that the Futurity of England incessantly steeps and revivifies herself in the waters of the Past. Nowhere else in the world is the middle age still alive and flourishing as it is at Oxford and Cambridge. Nor is it a revival—a factitious restoration—a mosaic fortunately discovered and cleared of

* In Dod's *Parliamentary Companion*, a sort of annual report of the two Houses, which has in England almost the authority of an official report, we always see the University honours carefully assigned to the members who have been fortunate enough to have made such a début in public life.

the rubbish of revolutions: it had never perished.

Most of the foundations date from the time when England was still Catholic, and they have preserved the indelible stamp of their origin. The spirit of preservation, which is the most precious gift of the English race, exists here more strongly than anywhere else. In these, the head-quarters of Anglicanism, have been maintained with respect, and in the most prominent situations, the effigies of the two sovereigns whose Catholicism has rendered them the most unpopular of all British rulers.

At Cambridge, and there only through the three kingdoms, we see the statue of the first Queen Mary, so odious to the English people, because she attempted by the sad means required by the intolerance of her age, between the brutal Henry VIII. and the merciless Elizabeth, to bring back her kingdom to the unity of Catholicism.

At Oxford is equally standing the statue of James II., who paid with his crown the hazardous honour of having tried to imitate

Louis XIV., in imposing at the same time Catholicism and absolute power on his kingdom.

The English people are not subject to that odious mania of degrading and of mutilating historical monuments, in the vain hope of effacing even the remembrance of the victims of the passions and of the injustice of revolutions. Quite the reverse. During the most discouraging period of the siege of Sebastopol, the ceremony of the *Commemoration* took place at Oxford, where two generals of the Crimean army received the honorary degree of Doctors of Law, amidst the warmest ovation of applause that ardent and patriotic youths could offer to those distinguished veterans. During this ceremony and this enthusiasm, and in the hall where it took place, there remained the full-length portrait of the Emperor of Russia, who had in 1815 participated in a similar solemnity. His likeness was there as a witness of the Past, and none thought of making him pay, by an indignity to his portrait, a ransom for the Present.

Of course, the celebrities belonging more

especially to the universities are the objects of the highest homage. Where indeed could we more rationally expect to find this respect for intellectual ancestry than in a corporation that, like Trinity College, Cambridge, has the signal honour of reckoning on its genealogical tree the names of Bacon, Milton, Newton, and Byron?—that is to say, the greatest geniuses of England—except Shakspeare, who was at no university, and Burke, who was educated in Dublin.

It is evident that this spirit of conservation is not likely to be confined to material monuments, but will also extend itself still more energetically to the habits and traditions which presided over the birth and infancy of these great institutions. Here everything shows the influence of this protective spirit. I asked one day the *master* (president, or superior of a college) to give me some details on the interior regulations of the establishment. "Nothing is easier," he answered; "no alteration has been made in the Statutes which were given to us by our foundress, the Lady Margaret, Countess

of Richmond, mother of King Henry VII., in 1505." Innovations, when they are to be undergone, must come from without—from the Government, or Parliament. Thus only has Protestantism, and under its most mitigated form, been able to penetrate into and invade these creations of the old faith.

Now, however, the most accredited chiefs of the two Universities resign themselves to the prudent and moderate reforms decreed and prepared by Parliament, with the privilege of modifying them in their application. They work with energy and success to get rid of the abuses inseparable from the advantages of durability—the trammels of routine, and the rust of time. With one hand they open a door to religious liberty, while with the other they extend the sphere given to physical and mathematical sciences. This year, while Lord Derby was laying at Oxford the first stone of a museum solely destined to objects of natural history in this ancient sanctuary belonging so exclusively formerly to theological and classical studies, Parliament was abrogat-

ing the oaths which were an interdiction of the access of Catholics to this University.

I do not pretend to describe the interior and exterior life of the English Universities. If I had leisure to do it, it would be unnecessary, having already been so well executed by M. Lorain, who, in a memoir presented to the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, has explained with equal authority, talent, and accuracy the government and the organisation of these great bodies, the rights and the functions both of the professors and of the students, the system of studies and of examinations.* I only wish to point out two or three facts which show the fundamental analogy of these Universities with the other political and social institutions of England, and consequently the natural influence that they must exercise on the maintenance of the old British spirit.

First, their complete independence of the

* *Mémoire sur l'Université d'Oxford*, by M. Lorain, read to the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, the 22nd and 29th of June, 1850; *Extrait du Compte rendu de l'Académie*, rédigé par M. Charles Vergé.

Government. They must, of course, like every body, recognise the power of the law and the supremacy of Parliament, which, however, on its part exercises it with infinite reserve. But with the executive power, properly called Government, it has nothing to do. Hardly does it appoint two or three professors to each University.* All the chiefs of the University, all the members of the different colleges whose aggregation forms the University, are elected by their peers, like the members of the Institute of France, but without any intervention, presentation, or approbation of the Government. They receive from Government neither warrant nor salary. They do not render it any account of their teaching. The course of studies, the conditions of admission, the course of examination, the regulations for internal and external discipline, all is beyond and above the intervention of the Government. The conservative spirit which has always distinguished

* Namely, those who are called *Regius Professors*. There are seven of them at Oxford, and only two at Cambridge.

the English Universities is then solely the spontaneous fruit of independence and of conscience. The Universities are in this, as in everything else, an image of English society at large, and, like the other parts of this great aristocratical system, free and proud, but orderly, and all the more respectful to authority from feeling itself independent—always accessible to merit—always ready for useful progress, for necessary reforms, but always solidly resting on the tradition of the institution and on the rights of the individual.

And thus it is that the office of Chancellor of the University of Oxford or Cambridge, conferred for life by election by all the doctors and graduates, is considered as a supreme honour conferred on a Prince or a Peer of England, and that as such it was conferred on the Duke of Wellington before Lord Derby, as the honour of representing one of the Universities in the House of Commons is the most sought of all by ministers and orators, such as Pitt, Peel, and Gladstone.

Next to this political independence, the circumstance which peculiarly distinguishes the English Universities from the establishments bearing the same name on the Continent is, that each of these is composed of an aggregation of twenty distinct Colleges, which are so many little republics, of which the several founders have been the legislators. Each college contains a certain number of fellows, varying from ten to a hundred, who renew themselves under certain conditions established by the founder, and who only lose their office by marrying or by voluntarily accepting some other benefice. They elect from amongst themselves a chief for life, and conduct, under his direction, the instruction and examination of the students. This collegiate education is the basis of the existence at the University: each college has its laws and particular regulations, *honours*, and special examinations, besides those imposed, conferred, or required by the whole University. It is, in truth, a moral and intellectual *federation*, of which each branch, like the States of North America and the

Cantons of old Switzerland, has a history, a legislation, an influence, and a renown of its own, but which all come to pour themselves, like the confluents of a great river, into one common reservoir of strength, of honour, and of life.

Each college has, moreover, its property. They have all been richly endowed by their founders with landed estates, which, though distant and scattered about in many different counties, are supposed to be better managed than any other property in a country where all property is taken good care of—a cogent argument against the adversaries of mort-main. These revenues, added to what the students pay, supply the personal and material expenses of these colleges, where masters and pupils are fed at easy charges, and comfortably lodged in edifices whose fine exteriors and magnificent halls and chapels rival the palaces of the aristocracy.

Thus, then, are united independence with discipline, variety with unity, diversity of studies with liberty of choice; in addition to these, the antiquity, the religious and in-

tellectual objects of the foundations, the extent and stability of their patrimonial property give to these great sanctuaries of education in England a character entirely different from anything that is to be found on the Continent (Belgium only excepted), and which, I must repeat, assimilates and associates itself to all the other branches of English society.

We see from what precedes that the English Universities, like the English Constitution and the whole frame of English society, are no other than a magnificent tradition of the middle age, such as it existed in all western Europe. France, Italy, Germany, Bohemia, the Low Countries, Spain, Portugal, Scandinavia, possessed formerly some precisely similar institutions. The University of Paris was organised exactly on the same footing, with its numerous and celebrated colleges of Navarre, of Beauvais, of Lisieux, of Harcourt, &c., most of them founded by the munificence of the Bishops and of the local *Seigneurs*. This is so true, that in the discussions that took place in the University of Oxford concerning the application of the reforms re-

cently introduced, the parties were obliged to look for the solution of some difficulties to Du Boulay's 'History of the University of 'Paris.' So evident and natural is the analogy between what we have lost and what the English have been so careful to preserve.

We know, besides, that the word *university* was applied only to independent corporations, and never to a system of national and public education, which did not exist till Napoleon, coming after the Revolutionary deluge had swept all away, could imagine no better expedient than the replacing our eighteen Universities and the innumerable free-schools formerly distributed over the face of France, by that system of educational *barracks* which still exists, though modified in its most oppressive applications by the law of 1850.

I shall say but one word of the students, and that will be to notice another and very significant contrast between theirs and ours. Ours come suddenly out of the servitude of the *Lycées*, where every hour of the day is regulated by an inexorable pattern common to all France, and from this servile restraint they are

flung at once into the absolute liberty or rather licence of a young man's Parisian life. As soon as the schoolboy is transformed into one of our collegians, nobody interferes with either his studies or conduct. He lodges where he pleases, and does what he likes from morning till night and from night till morning. The English youth leaves a school like Eton, where he has felt the enjoyment and the responsibility of liberty, only to find at either Oxford or Cambridge a discipline almost as severe as that to which he has been accustomed all his life. He may spend the day as he likes, but he must attend divine service twice a-day, and never can appear in the streets without his academical dress—a long gown and a square cap. Besides, every student must have in one of the colleges an apartment of his own, but he must dine in the common hall with his fellow-students and the masters, and he must always be in at night at an appointed hour. Any serious contravention to these rules, any offence against morality, or even against the manners of polished society, brings either, in extreme

cases, expulsion from the University, or, for minor errors, *rustication*, that is to say, exile for three months, which also entails certain pecuniary forfeitures, which of course fall on the family of the young delinquent, to the amount of forty or fifty pounds. Such is the discipline to which the English youths, from eighteen to two-and-twenty, submit without one word of complaint, and which teaches them a sense of personal responsibility and at the same time respect for the laws and for traditional authority.

That there should be in these great academical confederations, where such a number of men are congregated together, squabbles, jealousies, petty rivalries, is what no man who knows anything of human nature could doubt; but experience assures us that, after making due allowance for human infirmity, there never has been and never can be an organisation more conducive to morality,*

* I speak here relatively of course, and not absolutely. I do not pretend to say that the English student's morals are much better than those of the students of France, Germany, and Italy, but that they certainly are subjected to a much severer discipline.

and to the freedom and dignity of education.

Numerous objections have been raised against the system of education followed by these powerful and ancient corporations. They are reproached with being too rich, too backward, and too sterile—with not keeping up to the march of modern ideas—and with not publishing many or very considerable works. But the English Universities may answer their detractors with triumph in showing what they have produced, that is, the whole English nation represented by its more prominent and influential classes. They have been instituted — to use a fine expression of Dr. Pusey—to make *men*, and not *books*; and all impartial observers must admit that they have admirably fulfilled their mission.

I must not forget the external aspect of these Universities, which is at least as startling and as original as their internal organisation; but I hardly know how to describe so striking a picture. Let us imagine congregated in the same town, and contiguously

grouped, fifteen or twenty of our ancient abbeys in all the grandeur and magnificence of their most flourishing epochs, such as we see them in the plates, now so rare, of the 'Monasticon Gallicanum,' or from the views, still rarer, of Cluny, Citeaux, and Clairvaux; each of them having two, or three, or four cloisters of round or pointed arches, all having large refectories lofty and vaulted like churches, with always a library of its own, and sometimes with a museum and a gallery of pictures, but invariably with a chapel, where divine service is performed two or three times a-day, with the choral accompaniment of ancient music. To be sure, none of these buildings, taken separately, are exempt from architectural defects; there are, however, but very few of them which do not astonish us by their grandeur and a picturesque distribution so admirably adapted to their destination; and there are very few also which do not possess some special merit either of style or of antiquity. Many of these are monuments of the highest beauty, such as King's College and the façade of St. John's

at Cambridge, the cloisters of Magdalen and Merton; and the cathedral of Christ Church at Oxford. But it is, above all, the extent, the number, the approximation, the *ensemble* of these vast and curious edifices which have an effect prodigious and unique, that, like the Alhambra at Granada and the Piazzetta of Venice, leaves an impression to be produced nowhere else and never to be effaced.

In this respect Cambridge is perhaps preferable even to Oxford; its seventeen colleges, smaller in general than the twenty-four at Oxford, are better grouped, and nearer one to another. In Cambridge most of them are placed in a series, as it were, on the banks of a clear and deep stream which waters and embellishes a great number of parks, rich in such trees as are nowhere else to be seen. Each college has its park, and these parks have no other division between them than an open iron railing or a sunk fence, so that all together they have the appearance of a large forest, scattered through which emerge the

towers, the spires, and embattled roofs of the colleges.*

At Oxford the courts, the gardens, the parks, reserved for the recreation of masters and students, are still larger and at wider intervals. Some are almost in the country; in others, on velvet turf of incomparable verdure, and under the shade of great trees of more than secular antiquity, which there as everywhere are the greatest ornaments of English landscape, you see groups of deer or of peacocks, which still occupy those sites because the founder of the college desired, some three or four centuries since, that it should be so. These are the gardens of Armida, transported from fairy-land to be a real Academus of education—a scene of living history.

That Englishman is to be pitied who has not spent there some portion of his youth; but much more to be pitied is he who, after having lived there, could recollect without

* This is the walk called the *Backs of the Colleges.*

emotion these courts and their cloisters, these lawns and groves, these chapels and their chants—he who, when called in the political struggles of after-life to discuss and decide upon the ideas and institutions of which Oxford and Cambridge are the types and sanctuaries, should not look back on his own bright dawn, and think of his children, as the poet suggests :—

> " si quid
> Turpe paras, ne tu pueri contempseris annos :
> Sed peccaturo obsistat tibi filius infans."*

But such forgetfulness is as rare as it would be deplorable; and as long as the great majority of the sons of the superior classes is educated at the Universities, and as long as they are allowed to maintain their independence and present organisation, we are satisfied that the old English society will possess an army of intelligent, devoted, and energetic champions, that may bid a bold defiance to all her adversaries.

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* Juvenal, xiv. 48.

SECTION XI.

CATHOLICISM IN ENGLAND.

THERE is, however, a wonder more striking than all the wonders of Oxford and Cambridge—I mean the moral courage of those who have resigned the happiness of such a residence—who have sacrificed high positions —who have quitted those enchanting spots, and broken the strongest ties of a man's heart to re-enter the unity of Catholicism. We know that Oxford was the place where those eminent men, designated very improperly under the name of *Puseyites*, after having tried, but in vain, to regenerate the Anglican church, ended by confessing Catholic truth, and abandoning for it their benefices, their hardly-earned positions, their legitimate ambition, their popularity, their domestic comforts, their means of subsistence, and too often their dearest friendships—such men as

Manning, Newman, Faber, Wilberforce, who were, even by the admission of those who have not followed their glorious example, the first of men — first for their virtue as well as for their talent, their science, and their eloquence. It will be an eternal honour to the Catholic church of the nineteenth century to have recovered such noble beings by the means of study and conviction only, without any constraint or any help from either authority or public opinion. It will also be an eternal honour to England to have given birth to such followers of truth, and to have given the world, in a time like ours, so engrossed by the love of worldly gain, an example of the generous sacrifice of all the enjoyments of material and intellectual life to the happiness of following the dictates of a conscience subdued and enlightened by faith.

We understand at once all the merit and all the consolation of such a sacrifice, when, coming out of those academical cloisters and palaces, preserved by the national spirit of a great people, but diverted by schism fro m Catholic truth, we kneel at the foot of the

altar, where this truth is still preserved, in the poor, small chapel which, under the safeguard of religious liberty, is allowed to stand in one of the remote and neglected outskirts of the town.

On Sundays, or on one of the festivals suppressed by the Reformation, but celebrated formerly with such pomp in one of these basilicæ, which have retained no other trace of Catholicism than their architectural beauty and their names—to them a living reproof* —the traveller must tear himself from the seduction of these splendours, now usurped by the greedy pride of the Anglicans, to go and worship elsewhere the God of the humble and of the poor. He must enter this modest, dark, and low sanctuary, but which, at Cambridge at least, has received in its poverty, from the hand of Pugin, a look of the architectural renaissance. He may meet

* There is a *Corpus Christi* College at Oxford, and another at Cambridge, though the Anglican Church does not admit Transubstantiation. There is also *All Souls* College, although the prayers for the dead are interdicted; and the Colleges of St. Magdalen, St. John, St. Alban, St. Edward, although intercession to the Saints is prohibited.

there, perhaps, a descendant of one of those ancient races of Norman gentlemen whose faith has victoriously braved during ten generations proscription and contempt. He will find himself placed near a poor servant maid, who also has endured all, sacrificed all for the truth.

He will see one or two students, fearful and curious, who come to see, and not to pray; some artisans, Irish labourers, ragged missionaries of the old religion. But he will feel the contagion of an unusual fervour; a sweet and noble emotion will fill his heart; he will taste there in all its purity the delight of belonging to that church which, after so many losses and so many misfortunes, survives them all and gets younger and stronger. And then the consciousness of a supernatural strength and greatness will take possession of him. He will say to himself with a just pride that the majesty of the English people is less imposing — its secular constitution less ancient—its robust society less solid, and that immense British empire, on which the sun never sets, less immense than that great

Church of which he, a stranger, is, with these poor, disinherited votaries, the child and the representative in this usurped land.

But it is also at such moments that every Catholic laments bitterly that the impenetrable will of God should have permitted such a country to be severed from the Catholic unity.

Although England has preserved more than any other nation the Catholic spirit of the middle age, her virtue and her grandeur have still too much of ancient Rome. Christian at heart and in feeling, she would need constantly to refresh herself in the Christian spirit of which modern Rome is the only pure reservoir. But how much for three centuries, and even at this hour, has the Church not had to deplore the hostility, or even the indifference of this great nation! Alas! the Church is wanting to England, and England to the Church. What would not the English, if they had remained true to the old faith, have done for it with their indefatigable activity, their indomitable energy, the propagandising influence of their commerce, their

fleet, the munificence of their contributions, now so profusely given to error!

What strength—what help, the Roman church would have found there! what an abundant harvest in the race who gave to ecclesiastical liberty St. Anselm, St. Thomas, St. Edmund, the most valiant champions that the Church ever had—that race, which now dedicates so many treasures of money and perseverance to the propagation of an erroneous and impotent Christianity!

What a compensation it would be for the Church!—what a contrast with the Southern nations, which now, after two centuries of sterility and of decline, are on the high road to apostacy! But what a benign and salutary influence would Catholicism have exercised over the hearts of the English people! How it would have softened its unbending disposition, purified its asperity, and above all, diminished its implacable egotism! She would then have realised the ideal of a Catholic nation, with all the civilisation of modern days.

But God decreed otherwise. The spirit of

evil has prevailed. The tie which for a thousand years united England with Rome has been violently broken. Rome and England have been ever since, and still are, in violent contention—a struggle all the more alarming, because since the Revolution events have brought them into more direct collision, and, as it were, face to face.

Thus it is that Rome and England, like two souls made to understand and love each other, but severed by some fatal error—the fault of a day, of a moment perhaps—become alienated for ever, and follow side by side, in constant conflict, and with mutual injury, the road which, if they were in peace and union, would have led them to the height of joy and felicity: and yet nevertheless a ray of light—some misfortune—one of those chances which reveal the mysteries of an Almighty Providence, might even now suffice for good, as it formerly did for evil; and surely, of all the reconciliations which the world has witnessed, this reconciliation would be the happiest and the most fruitful.

I have no intention of examining here in

detail the situation of England in a religious point of view, nor will I attempt to discuss what futurity may have in reserve for Catholicism or Anglicanism. That in itself would require a volume. I even beg my readers to remember that I have undertaken to write of England in a political, and not in a religious point of view. This sufficiently explains why I enlarge on some questions, while I say nothing of others of greater importance.

There is, however, one fact too manifest and too important, even in a political view, not to be mentioned here.

Since the Emancipation so gloriously obtained by O'Connell, twenty-five years ago, Catholicism has been on the increase through all the British empire; not only in Ireland, but in England, and even in Puritan Scotland, and still more especially in the English colonies, where the number of Catholic dioceses, parishes, churches, monasteries, and religious congregations increases rapidly and steadily.

In London, in one of the most conspicuous points of one of the populous suburbs, the

astonished passenger sees a vast assemblage of Gothic edifices, an admirable church, an episcopal residence, a parsonage, schools, and an establishment of Sisters of Mercy. This is St. George's, Southwark—this is the sanctuary where, under the name of the patron of old England, the triumphant flag of faith and religious liberty is raised, in the centre of a busy neighbourhood, and in the midst of a noisy, and either hostile or mostly indifferent crowd.

But Protestant animosity, which had slumbered so long, is roused. The indifference, or indulgence, which had gone so far as to reconcile the public mind to the presence of a nuncio of the Holy See at the English Court,* has disappeared to give place to invectives, both official and popular, against the papacy. Is this deplorable change to be attributed to the way

* The law for re-establishing diplomatic relations between the two courts had passed the House of Commons; but an amendment introduced in the House of Lords by a Scotch fanatic, Lord Eglinton, who insisted that the Pope should only send laymen as envoys, rendered this law useless. It is very possible that Lord Eglinton, without being aware of it, has rendered a very great service to the Catholic church and to the Holy See.

in which was promulgated and applied the Bull of 1850, re-establishing in England the episcopal hierarchy, and which, in the annals of the Church, will attach to the pontificate of Pius IX. a glory so rare and so enviable? Many think so. I incline to believe that they are mistaken, and that there is in this but a natural consequence of the unexpected progress of a faith supposed to be extinct, and above all of the numerous conversions which have, as it were, beheaded the Anglican clergy, by depriving it of its most eminent theologians and its most exemplary ministers.

But there is an apprehension that I must be permitted to express, not, however, without a respectful diffidence. I feel the greatest respect for every English Catholic. No one in the Christian universe has deserved more than they do from the orthodox Faith. Some families have kept it intact through three centuries of affronts and of persecutions. Others have regained it at the cost of sacrifices of which our age had no conception. Nevertheless I fear that among those generous

neophytes who have honoured and consoled the Church, and who now, in sacred orders or in the Catholic press, devote themselves to the defence of their new faith, there may be some who do not sufficiently dread the danger of hurting or braving the national feeling—a feeling of which it is always so dangerous to make an enemy, and which is nowhere more powerful and more susceptible than in England.

I shall never believe what we constantly hear objected by the enemies of the true faith, that an Englishman, in becoming a Catholic, as his fathers were three hundred years ago, would become estranged from his own country, and assimilated to an Italian or a Frenchman.

The glory of the Catholic Church—one of the conditions and of the consequences of her immortality—is to render herself always *all to all*. It is to lend herself with an indefatigable flexibility to the institutions, the manners, the ideas of all countries and of all ages, in all that is not incompatible with faith and Christian virtue. It is to allow all her chil-

dren to have, as it were, a private residence—to possess a peculiar patrimony of their own, in the midst of that incomparable Catholic unity which does triumph over all, and survives to all only by its elasticity and its universality. "In my Father's house there are many mansions."

England above all claims and deserves in this respect some special precautions; for we must recollect that it is not a heathen country. We cannot treat her as we do the islands of the South Sea, or the plains of Thibet. It is a Christian country, where Christianity, though mutilated and disfigured, and in rebellion against the only legitimate ecclesiastical authority, still possesses an energy, a force, and a fecundity which is not to be despised. Moreover, it is a country which was Catholic for a thousand years — three times longer than it has been Protestant, and where Catholicism has imprinted numerous and indelible vestiges of its empire. This being the case, it is evident that the most honest and able, as well as the easiest tactic for the new Catholics would be a

constant appeal to the past, which no Englishman repudiates, and to carry back as to it, to its source, all the improvements and developments of modern civilisation. The most venerated institutions of England, her best and purest glories, are connected with Catholicism. Trial by jury, the Parliament, the Universities, date from the time when England was the submissive daughter of the Holy See. It was Catholic barons got Magna Charta from King John. Irish Catholics constituted the principal strength of the English armies in the Peninsula and in the Crimea. Except Queen Elizabeth, the only sovereigns of whom the people have kept the memory are Catholic kings—Alfred, Edward the Confessor, Richard Cœur de Lion, Edward III., Henry V. The cathedrals, the churches, the castles—all those ecclesiastical and feudal edifices—which was an English taste before it was ours, and which they preserve or restore with such pious care, are exclusively the work of Catholic generations. The fervent devotion of the new Catholics finds heaven peopled with English saints,

from St. Wilfrid and St. Boniface to St. Thomas of Canterbury. All this is the patrimony, the treasure of the English Catholics. Why then should they not remain English—as English as any? Why should they borrow from other countries, ideas, manners, forms, which, innocent, and even laudable in themselves, may excite the antipathy of the English people, and help to entertain that well-rooted and powerful prejudice which has made them abjure *Popery* as a religion essentially anti-national?* Why disdain the recollections and guarantees of old England? Why, above all, should they affect indifference or dislike for the great principles of liberty which are the very life of England—principles which arise from a constitution made by the Catholics of the middle ages, and which give to the modern Catholics the only strength that they can oppose to victorious Protestantism?†

* More than one historian of credit has affirmed that if Queen Mary had not, in marrying Philip II., appeared to identify the Catholic cause with the Spanish and Continental spirit, the ancient religion might have been solidly established.

† There is a Catholic newspaper published in Dublin which

I fear lest the ideas which have been gaining ground for four years amongst some Catholics on the Continent should infect the present generation of our brethren on the other side of the Channel. The English Catholics, in imitating the examples of this school, which has taken the Duke of Alba for one of its heroes, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes as one of its triumphs, would renounce their most powerful weapon, the only one indeed invincible in our days.

Liberty of conscience, independent of all human law—the tutelary principle that the English Catholics have the *glory* of having been *the first* to plant as early as the seventeenth century in the New World,* is their strength and their glory in their mother-country. They have a right to make it their

every week has two or three invectives against the very constitution in virtue of which it has a right to express its opinion, and to abuse everything English without danger and without restriction.

* In Maryland State, founded by Lord Baltimore in 1632, at the head of a Catholic colony which took for the basis of its constitution religious liberty and the representative system, principles that no other colony had as yet admitted. It remains the principal centre of the Catholic religion in the United States.

property as well as their occasional arm; for this principle, so often invoked by the Protestants, is always repudiated by them in practice. Wherever Protestants have become masters, they have thought themselves obliged to ignore or to abrogate it.

One of the most ardent admirers of the Reformation has proclaimed this recently:— "WHEREVER LIBERTY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE RIVAL CHURCH, PROTESTANTISM HAS VERY SOON DISAPPEARED, DEFEATED, DISHONOURED." * What a confession! and what a lesson! Thank heaven! Catholicism has nothing of the sort to fear. It is nowhere more flourishing, more vigorous, more triumphant than it is where the rival Churches enjoy in fact and in rights the most complete liberty, as in France and in Belgium. Much stronger is it than where it has slumbered so long, and where it fancies itself sheltered by the chimerical theory of its exclusive domination, as in Spain, in Portugal, and in Italy. The fanaticism of

* Edgard Quinet, *Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde*, 1854.

the *Know-nothings* in America is but a humiliating consequence of the powerless rage of Protestantism against the prodigious increase of Catholicism, which it owes to the mere strength of religious liberty.*

But it is especially in England that experience is conclusive for the Catholics. Without political liberty they were powerless; with it everything is become powerless against them. The Catholics owe everything to liberty; nothing to temporal authority. Neither Philip II. nor James II. were able to avert their defeat; but from the moment that they claimed only the common rights, when they retorted against their adversaries the principle of liberty of conscience, all the power and all the prejudices of England have vainly tried to compress their efforts.

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* The two most important organs of the Catholic press in the United States, the *Quarterly Review* of the eloquent and learned Mr. Brownson, which is published at Boston, and the *Freeman's Journal*, which is published at New York, though agreeing very seldom, are unanimous in asserting that the attempts of the Know-Nothings are of no serious danger to the existence of Catholicism in America. They both protest against the alarms created on this subject in Europe.

A hundred years ago, when the last of the Stuarts tried to reconquer the throne of his fathers, they were nothing more than a handful of poor creatures, forgotten even by the Catholic world; now wherever the English flag is flying in the five parts of the world, it shelters a church and school and a colony Catholic and free.*

Such is the strength of liberal institutions sincerely put in practice, that their spirit ends in overcoming national manners and the most inveterate prejudices, and even the most stringent laws. Can we fancy the application of a measure like that of the re-establishment of the Catholic hierarchy by Pius IX. in a Protestant country which should be governed as is the kingdom of Naples? It would be simply impossible. Well, in England, notwithstanding the effervescence of the

* We read lately in the *Waterford Chronicle* the touching letter of an Irish soldier in the 84th regiment of infantry, stationed at Rangoon, in the Birman empire. He mentioned a church that he and his comrades were building with a voluntary subscription of a thousand pounds, and two hundred added by Government. It was, he said, the third Catholic church that he had seen being constructed since he had been in India.

popular passions, that measure has met, thanks to political and religious liberty, no serious obstacle, and the opposition has only accelerated the Catholic movement.

All the restrictions imposed by the Act of 1829 to the development of the Jesuits and other religious orders, all the penalties recently decreed against the taking public possession of Episcopalian titles, have been absolutely and ridiculously powerless, thanks to the liberty of association, the liberty of tuition, and the liberty of the press, of which it is no longer possible to deprive an English citizen. Laws must be made individually and nominatively to deprive of this liberty such and such a man on account of the religion he professes; and if such laws were now made, judges, agents, and denunciators must be specially found to apply them. That was done formerly, but now the force of liberal habits would not allow the public passions to go to

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* Since 1851 the number of Catholic churches in the twelve dioceses newly established has risen from 586 to 653, that is to say, by an eighth; the nunneries from 53 to 82, that is, by a half.

this extremity. The pride of the Anglicans and the fanaticism of the Dissenters would rejoice at seeing English and Irish Catholics replunged in their former slavery; but, placed under the protection of the principles and the practice of a Government sincerely constitutional, the Catholics have until now braved with triumph the hatred and the malice of their enemies. Their churches, their houses of education, and their monasteries for both sexes are founded, are peopled, and are maintained with a facility and a liberty which not only is not surpassed, but which is not even equalled, in any country of the world, be it Catholic or Protestant. Their liberty may now be reckoned as beyond all danger. What remains to them now is to obtain in practice a more sincere and equitable observation of the principles of equality in all that refers to the nomination to employments—an equal share in public grants—the intervention of ecclesiastics paid by the state in the army, in the prisons, and in the hospitals—and this they will attain; slowly, perhaps, but they will attain it: their rights,

their rapidly increasing numbers, the necessities of the time in which we live—everything is for them.

In maintaining the ground where O'Connell planted their flag, they are unattackable and are sure to advance; but if they leave it to adopt the intolerant and despotic theories of some Catholic writers on the Continent, they open a breach to attacks as dangerous to them as easy to the enemy; they will become again and will remain *foreigners at home*; they will render the abyss which separates them from their Protestant brothers deeper and more impassable: for we must not deceive ourselves; however strong may be the recent enthusiasm of the English for certain new shapes of authority introduced in the world, they enter into it with so much effusion only because they feel certain, with a confidence perhaps ill founded, that they are themselves safe from the possibility of such a system.

It is impossible to speak of Catholicism in England without giving a few thoughts and lines to Ireland, which has been till now the heart and bulwark of its strength.

I feel honoured to have been the first to point out to the French Catholics the sufferings and the glory of their Irish brethren.* The Emancipation Act had then just passed, and Ireland was beginning again to be reckoned amongst the countries of Europe.

We know what an important part has since been taken by the Irish representatives in the English Parliament, and how, under O'Connell's guidance, they have ensured a definitive preponderance to Whig politics.

Hardly was this great man dead when a disastrous famine, caused by the potato-disease, came to decimate a population which owed to the too easy culture of this root an increase out of all proportion to its resources; but, by a mysterious dispensation of Divine goodness, this hard trial is become the starting-point of a considerably better condition. An immense emigration, carrying with it everywhere the Catholic faith, was organised. The Irish race now expands itself in Australia,

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* Letters on Catholicism in Ireland, addressed to the Journal *L'Avenir*, November, 1830.

Canada, and in the United States. It has been calculated that in two years one million three hundred thousand Irish have landed in America. From this arises a double benefit. First, the Church has received in the United States an immense reinforcement, which has enabled her to take prodigious developments, against which the fanaticism of the *Know-nothings* struggles in vain, and to increase the number of the Catholics, which was only 25,000 in 1789,* to more than 1,000,000 in 1855 for the ecclesiastical province of New York alone.† And while Ireland was thus giving her famished but ever faithful children to people the New World, she was re-establishing her own equilibrium. The number of individuals who receive the succours of public charity, and which was in January, 1849, as high as 620,147, was reduced in January, 1855, to 106,802, notwithstanding the bad harvest of last year. Everything indicates that poverty is every day diminish-

* When the first Catholic bishopric was founded at Baltimore.

† There are in the United States three other metropolitan or ecclesiastical provinces—Baltimore, Cincinnati, Oregon.

ing, and several bishops have used their moral authority to prevent their flocks from following the current of emigration.

But another change still more important, and a thousand times more beneficial, has passed silently, unperceived among us. The territorial property in Ireland, which had long ago passed into the hands of Protestants of English and Scotch origin by the confiscations *en masse* under Elizabeth and by Cromwell, had become greatly in debt, and mortgaged to an exorbitant degree. Their possession had become more onerous than profitable; but expropriation was impossible, or nearly so, on account of the numerous obstacles that English legislation opposes to the sale of landed property. Creditors and debtors were equally victims of this, and the unfortunate tenants suffered more than either. This aristocracy, foreign by origin and by faith to the country of which it sucked the substance, did not even reside in that country; it did not render it any of the services rendered in England by large properties; it was to unfortunate Ireland a

weight more crushing even than that of the Anglican Church.

But a recent Act of Parliament, known under the name of Encumbered Estates Bill, will gradually deliver the country, and will change the face of Ireland. A commission of lawyers has been appointed to bring into the market and sell by an expeditious process and in lots the encumbered properties throughout the island. This commission has done its work and continues to do it with complete success. The property thus changes hands, and, what is still better, it passes into those of Catholics. In fact, the ancient Catholic families of Ireland were dispossessed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of their territorial property; and the new families, enriched by trade and industry, could not easily obtain a landed investment. Now, thanks to the intervention of the new law, they may invest their savings and their capital in buying lots of the divided and dispersed domains of the Protestant aristocracy. Many English capitalists come to seize this prey; but it is said that the majority of the

new purchasers belongs to the middle class of Irish Catholics. This being so, Ireland will have what she most wanted—a class of landlords united to the people by their religion, and not rich enough to go and spend their revenues out of the country. This will be quite a revolution—a fruitful, legitimate, beneficent revolution—which will be the counterpoise of those which have until now ruined Ireland. This subdivision will have there none of the inconveniences it brings with it in France. There it is but a transitory measure, of which the fatal effects will disappear by the mere action of the general law affecting landed inheritances, for no one would now venture to imitate the old Protestant conquerors (of whom we spoke before) who had condemned the Irish Catholics to an equal division of their property amongst all their children, with the intention, but too well gratified, of thus destroying their fortune and their social influence.

SECTION XII.

ANGLICANISM.

THEN as to the Anglican clergy whose wealth is in Ireland, an evil without reason and without excuse, and which is doomed very shortly to disappear; but it would be a grave error to confound, or even to assimilate, the part and the influence of this clergy in England with its abusive and deleterious existence in Ireland. It is right that we should have an exact idea of what the Anglican Church is at home, where she has become the national, traditional Church, the Church of the people, and more especially of the country people. We are of course not inclined to exaggerate its merits; but let us not fall into the other extreme of exaggerating its weakness and tendency to decline, for fear of again incurring the disappointment and ridicule of which we have been more than

once the victims. Let us reject and avoid those injurious and unfounded declamations, those scandalous anecdotes, true or false, which are a repetition of the same kind of libels as were promulgated against the monks and the clergy of old France, and what is repeated every day in England against Rome. These things prove nothing—absolutely nothing—against the vitality of the institution itself. It is the glory of Catholicism not to fear the strength or power of any antagonist. Its votaries ought to consider it their privilege to leave—without regret, and above all unimitated—to the promoters of schism and of incredulity the wretched weapons of invectives, of derision, and more especially of calumny against ecclesiastic persons and appurtenances.

We shall certainly not find in the Anglican clergy the passionate ardour for doing good, the tender and generous solicitude for the salvation of souls, the daily practice of self-sacrifice in all that is most humble and heroic, all of which have never been more honoured in the Catholic priesthood than in

our age in France, in Germany, in Belgium, in Ireland, and everywhere, so that the consoling certainty of the immense superiority of the Catholic clergy suffices—more than suffices—to keep us from the fear of rendering too much justice to the adversary.

To appreciate the solid value of Anglicanism, to encounter it with advantage, and to discover its weak points, we must then begin by recognising the strength which lurks under its apparent torpor. We must, above all, not judge of it from the patterns of Protestantism that we see in France or at Geneva. To see in Protestantism such as it is in the national Church of England, what it is in several other sects—a negative religion—would be a gross error. The religion of the English has, on the contrary, all the characteristics of a positive, substantial religion, incomplete as it is, and sovereignly illogic. A faith, sincere and even fervent, in the Divinity and in the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ fills the souls of a number of laymen and of ministers of the Anglican Church. This is certainly not enough: what is it to

believe in the Son of God without believing in the authority and the sacraments that He instituted? We must then pity the Anglicans to be contented with so insufficient and so illogical a solution of the problem propounded by conscience and by nature; but we cannot deny the good faith of many, nor the deep and serious influence exercised over a great number of souls by the forms of worship and doctrine of Anglicanism.

It is incontestable that there has been a revival of religious feeling in England amongst the Anglicans as well as amongst the Catholics since the beginning of this century. It has been at once a revival of faith and a renewal of Christian manners. The general morality of English society has undoubtedly improved since that period. Whoever has known the habits and manners of the superior classes towards the end of George III.'s reign cannot help being struck with the change. The most frivolous as well as the most competent agree on that subject. The scandals then so numerous in the higher ranks are diminishing every day, and will soon disappear entirely.

When such things do happen, they excite, in a country where everything is told and everything published, a reprobation which is heard from one end of Great Britain to the other.

An open and practical profession of religious feeling, assiduity at public worship, a lively interest in all religious questions, with an active and constant solicitude for the poor and ignorant classes, are now the characteristics of a considerable portion, if not the majority of the English Aristocracy. A corresponding feeling is unfortunately not to be found in the working-classes, more especially in the towns. There an almost absolute indifference and ignorance in religious matters exist, in a proportion sadly analogous to that of the population. But still this Christian regeneration in the heads of society is a salutary and encouraging symptom, in a country where the example of the superior classes is still so powerful, and their political and social influence so very considerable. The English Aristocracy is to be honoured and congratulated for not having waited for the revolutionary deluge, before it put a stop to the cor-

ruption which threatened to drown it, and which has everywhere else subdued and enervated its victims before it finally destroyed them.

I do not think that any important share in this amelioration can be attributed to the Anglican Clergy. It seems rather to have begun with a few laymen, and above any, with William Wilberforce,* the illustrious author of the abolition of the slave-trade. The public and private life of this great man offers such a perfect pattern of fervour, of charity, of Christian humility, that I find it difficult to understand how so many virtues could exist beyond the bosom of supreme truth—the Catholic Church.†

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* We see in the Journal of his Life that he constantly complained of the lukewarmness and indifference of the bishops and of the high clergy from 1790 to 1797, when he published his book called 'Practical Christianity,' which has opened a new era in the history of Anglicanism.

† The Life of Wilberforce (born in 1759, deceased in 1833) has been written in five volumes by his two sons, one of whom is now Anglican Bishop of Oxford, and the other has recently renounced one of the highest dignities of the Established Church to enter into the way of truth. I do not know a book which gives a juster idea of the duties and merits of the public man, who desires to serve God and his neighbour in public life, than

However, without having had the honour of giving birth to this revival, the Anglican clergy has taken its part in it, and has reaped the good of it. It could not well be otherwise. This clergy is a branch of the Aristocracy, whose strength and whose weakness it shares. Here, as it was formerly in France, the ecclesiastical career is one of the most sought after by the younger sons of ancient and opulent families.

Besides, all, or almost all, the clergy are educated at Oxford or Cambridge, with the children of the Aristocracy. It was, then, no more than natural to see the clergy follow the guiding class in its return to religion.

Then came what was called the *Oxford movement*, inaugurated by the celebrated Doctor Pusey; and although it carried the most eminent amongst its promoters into the bosom of the Catholic Church, it nevertheless exerted a durable and fructifying action on Anglicanism itself.*

Wilberforce's example during the forty-five years that he was in the House of Commons.

* Twenty-five years ago, if an Oxford *Undergraduate* had been

The race of hunting, drinking, *bons-vivants* clergy, of whom we have seen and heard so much, and of whom anybody who lived in England thirty years ago must have a clear recollection, is completely gone by. It has been replaced by a clergy in which, though there is still an admixture of inferior and imperfect elements, there are also a vast number of studious, austere, pious, and charitable men. This charity, the ancient inheritance of the Church that this clergy replaces, has survived all their disorders, and has acquired of late additional developement.

The popular instruction in the country is almost entirely at the expense of the clergy. They provide for it by contributions from their income, and as early as 1847 they could show with pride 21,000 schools, 1,500,000 children, and 81,000 schoolmasters, that they maintain at an annual expense of 22,000,000

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seen to communicate (according to the Anglican rite), he would have excited as much surprise as an *élève* from the Ecole Polytechnique at the same time with us. In 1855, of 100 students at Merton College (*Merton College gave Mr. Manning to the Church*), 45 used to receive the communion weekly.

francs* (about 900,000*l.*) Let the most competent judges, and those most interested in pointing out the defects of the Anglican clergy, be consulted on this subject, more especially the members of that clergy who have left it to become Catholics; they will all tell you that they have left behind, in the English Church, much regularity, precious dispositions, and, above all, a great influence over the rural populations—an influence that has been strengthened by the recent panic caused by the numerous conversions to Catholicism.

The English People are much more Protestant than the clergy, and we might say that it is the people who encourage the clergy in their revolt against the unity of the Roman Church. Here the common axiom that *extremes meet* has received a complete refutation. Anglicanism is, of all Protestant sects, that which approaches nearest to Catholicism; and it is that also which has

* I give in round numbers the sums stated in the Parliamentary returns, cited by M. Lorain, 'On Popular Education in England,' 1855.

given Catholicism the most converts, while we see as yet no symptom of reconciliation, or even of impartial indifference, among the Dissenters. Some impatient spirits amongst us call loudly for the overthrow of the Anglican Church, and in that fall they anticipate the triumph of Catholicism in England. They are under a complete delusion. The Protestant enemies of the Established Church reproach her continually for being a hot-bed for Catholics, and her fall would only serve to enlarge the ranks, already too full, of the Rationalists and Socinians.

The architectural revival which has burst forth with so much energy among the Anglican clergy, is also a symptom of strength and of life that it would be useless to underrate. It may have degenerated with some young Puseyite ministers into puerile affectations. These are small evils, inseparably connected with all renovations and with all salutary changes; but it is not the less sure that it has opened a door to the study of ecclesiastical antiquity—that it has led many on the road to Unity, and that in those who have

stopped half-way it has engendered a profound respect for religious traditions, and consequently for Catholic authority.

Nothing can be more curious nor more meritorious than the efforts made by the Anglican clergy to restore to their cathedrals, the collegiate and abbey churches, the splendour of Catholic times. We must mention as a pattern the cathedral of Ely, a marvellous monument of monastic genius, repaired by the care of Dr. Peacock, Dean of the Anglican chapter, with as much skill as splendour.

In seeing those old churches—so large, so fine in their primitive beauty, and borrowing a new beauty from the painted glass and sculpture added to them by a pious munificence, we might fancy them ready to receive, in all its integrity, the Divine truth of which they possess but such a small portion.

This laudable and scrupulous respect of the English for ecclesiastical antiquities sometimes produces the strangest contrasts. Thus, in going on his pilgrimage to the profaned tomb of St. Thomas of Canterbury, the

Catholic sees a neo-Gothic chair, which he is told is the present Archbishop's throne, and close by the magnificent sepulchre of a cardinal of the fifteenth century, with an epitaph giving him all his titles, and where the words *Sacrosanctæ Romanæ Ecclèsiæ* come as it were to shame the usurped throne of the schismatic primate.

We must, however, admire sincerely the zeal and the munificence of the Anglican priests and laymen, for the adornment and the restoration of what they deem the house of God. We must felicitate them that, with their usual happy inconsistency, they do not perceive that the decoration so profusely reproduced on Catholic architecture and sculpture, rests most entirely on the doctrine of the real presence and of the invocation of saints—the tenets that official Anglicanism most rigorously proscribes, in spite of the protestations and the interpretations of the *Anglo-Catholic* school.

But, however, they do more than restore and adorn—they build. Although the Anglican clergy have the exclusive possession of

the vast number of churches, formerly built by the Catholics, a number no revolution ever had the power to decrease, the want of church accommodation is one of the great complaints of the time; although the last official return of the committee appointed to survey the erection of new churches states the number of those built in the last thirty-five years at *six hundred*, and these of the Anglican Church alone, and built by voluntary subscriptions, with a very small help from the Government. These new churches contain 584,000 sittings, of which 350,000 are made free in perpetuity, and reserved for the poor. It is not much compared with the immense increase of population in the working classes; but it is better than nothing, and a religion that builds is not on the decline.

We must also mention, as another sign of life, the efforts made by the Anglicans to shake off the yoke of temporal power, inflicted on them and accepted by Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, and of which they now and then are made to feel the weight. The Con-

vocation is a sort of spiritual parliament, analogous to our former assemblies of the clergy. It is composed of two chambers—one of the bishops, the other the delegates of the inferior clergy. It dates from the Catholic times, when it used to vote taxes on the Clergy. It had fallen practically into disuse, but has, for the last four years met again, no longer for form's sake, but to discuss serious questions, and more especially to claim from the Crown a little more *self-government*. Parliament, however, obliges the Crown to give civil refusals. It fancies perhaps that any emancipation of the official Church would tend to develope in itself the elements which would lead towards the Catholic Unity.

SECTION XIII.

THE EFFORTS OF ENGLISH SOCIETY AGAINST THE DANGER.

No one assuredly, even amongst her most devoted children, can believe that the Anglican Church, supposing her to be completely emancipated from any temporal authority, could alone have the strength to struggle against the social difficulties which threaten England. She may, however, have her share, and a considerable share, in the double work of resistance and transformation which is to save this great people. Far from excluding the Church, all the powerful social influences invite her to take a part in the great attempt.

But it is by the activity, the foresight, and the energy which always characterise the influential classes, that this saving work must be performed.

At the outset of any crisis on which a coun-

try is about to enter, the first condition of success is to know the danger, to study it, and look it in the face; and this is precisely what is done in England. No one is under any delusion as to the danger presented on the one hand from the rapid progress of democratic ideas, through a press that nothing can restrain, and on the other by the prodigious increase of the working population in the manufacturing districts, which is either indifferent or hostile to all religious influence—a population that has grown with the increased production of the coal mines, beyond all the proportions of old English society. The classes on whom devolve the great political interests of the country have nobly met the difficulty. They have not declined the responsibility of their social position, nor the obligations which bind them to the masses, whose pressure envelopes and overpowers them. They try to provide, in the first instance, for the danger that presses most, by the extension of popular education, under the inspiration of religion; and by innumerable institutions, wisely and liberally founded and

supported to extend and consolidate the material welfare and the moral progress of the working men and their families.

At every step we find proofs of the serious efforts and generous sacrifices which are made to advance this general good.

Amongst the number of institutions which might be mentioned, I must take notice of that admirable *Society for the Amelioration of the Working Classes*, of which the Earl of Shaftesbury is President, which, with the *Metropolitan Association for the Amelioration of the Dwellings of the Working Classes*, obtained, in 1851, an act of parliament for the better regulation of the lodgings of the poor. They have besides created at their own expense a vast number of model establishments, sought after with eagerness by the workmen, and where it is asserted the mortality, which generally in London is twenty-five in a thousand, has been reduced to eight in a thousand.*

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* Henry Roberts, *On the Physical Condition of the Working Classes*, p. 16. 1855.

Every intelligent traveller should make it a point to visit carefully these model houses, and compare them with the old lodging-houses, which have been, however, considerably improved since the law we have just mentioned.

In a still higher sphere, and to attain a just idea of the practical and spontaneous devotion with which those privileged by fortune and education labour to improve the moral and social condition, and promote the intellectual progress of the working population, one must visit the school for adult workmen, founded in London by subscriptions, directed with a pious and disinterested zeal by the Rev. Mr. Maurice, and where Mr. Ruskin, the most remarkable writer of the day on questions of art, gives gratuitous lectures. We should there learn the most curious details on the tendencies of the men who frequent that school; we should see some of them ask of their own accord to be taught Latin as well as French, and we should hear with what docility they receive the first instructions in the religion that they

know nothing of, and what profound and almost excessive gratitude they feel towards those who give themselves any trouble on their account.

We shall also understand the generosity which has caused the surplus of the considerable sums collected at the entrance of the Crystal Palace in 1851, to be spent in the formation of *forty* schools of drawing for the workmen of the provincial towns, founded by the Association of which the Crystal Palace itself had been entirely the spontaneous work.

In another suburb of London, and among so many institutions worthy of admiration and envy, we must mention also the school for the five hundred children of the two sexes employed in the candle manufactory of Messrs. Price and Co. The origin of this establishment, in 1848, was the spontaneous act of half-a-dozen little boys, who began to keep a mutual school among them in the corner of a workshop, without the suggestion or intervention of any one. By-and-by the other children gradually joined them, and during several months the school was suc-

cessfully conducted and extended by a committee chosen by the children themselves. So innate is the principle of *self-government* in this noble race. Now the partners of the company have taken this school in hand, and under the management of Mr. James Wilson, it has become a pattern of tender and intelligent solicitude for the minds and souls of the workmen's children.*

In a country where such facts are of daily and universal occurrence, who will dare to say that the rich have no care of the poor, that society has no compassion, that it hides an internal disease that gnaws it, or that it blinds itself to the necessity of looking out for a remedy?

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* *Special Report by the Directors to the Proprietors of Price's Patent Candle Company*, March 24, 1852. I find this passage in a very touching and curious letter of Mr. Wilson's:—"The manufacturers who get into Parliament to legislate on education appear to me as if the father of a family, giving himself up to parish business, were to employ a churchwarden and beadle to superintend the affairs of his own family. . . . . Public effort can never supply the place of private effort. The intervention of the State, however strong and powerful, can never rival that of the individual in the delicate task of forming human minds, and of developing the moral character of human beings at the most impressionable time of their lives."

Very far from seeing, as some pretend to do, in the upper orders, a permanent conspiracy against the suffering classes, we may affirm that there is a constant and sincere effort to ameliorate their condition. Public charity now goes far beyond any former limits; and it has been said with truth, that it is such national sacrifices that are the best evidence of national virtue.

From all this we may conclude that the directing classes in England are infinitely superior to what they were a hundred years ago, or perhaps at any period of their history. They are more moral, wiser, and more enlightened than they formerly were. That does not mean that they are yet sufficiently so, that there is no room for further improvement; but it proves that they are animated by a spirit of devotion and charity which is every day on the advance.

We do not mean to conclude that the English Aristocracy is safe in its position. God, to humble the pride of the conqueror, and to console the afflictions of the vanquished, and to inculcate that indispensable

precept, "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come," (*Heb.* xiii. 14)—God, I say, sometimes permits that powers of this world should fail and disappear at the moment when they seem most to deserve to be preserved. The French monarchy fell under the best of the Kings who had reigned since Saint Louis—under that King who the most thoroughly loved the people in whose name he was murdered.

History is but a long chronicle of the triumphs of violence, of falsehood, of ingratitude, and of egotism; but justice and reason, devotion and honour do not the less vindicate their value and their rights. It is precisely the uncertainty of their success here below which constitutes their merit and their glory.

SECTION XIV.

WILL ENGLAND DEMOCRATIZED REMAIN FREE?

IT is time to conclude. After these prolonged excursions in too vast a career, let us return to the problem we began with; let us suppose that a sudden hurricane has swept away all that we have been admiring and praising. Suppose all the aristocratic institutions of England annihilated—the Peerage destroyed—the House of Commons overthrown by universal suffrage—the Universities and public schools suppressed — Old England buried under a chaos of ruins, as France was in 1789; but, lastly, supposing that England has, like France, survived such a catastrophe, let us on these premises ask ourselves if England, though she should survive it, will still remain free.

Thus put, this question concerns and interests all the modern nations. All have lost,

or are losing, the last remnants of their aristocratic institutions, traditions, and manners; and aristocracy, once cut down, can no more be raised again than a forest of oaks after it has been grubbed and ploughed. But are we doomed to pass all our future life without safety or shelter because the residence of our youth has disappeared? Must we never plant again, never expect to see another growth because we can never again see the same groves that our fathers have destroyed? Must we, as a certain school of sophists teaches us, live without liberty because we have no longer an aristocracy to ensure it? Must we allow ourselves to be duped by those belated panegyrists who have never known nor understood the value of what they praise till after they have destroyed it? In the minds of all statesmen, and indeed of every thinking man in France, the cause of the aristocracy was won from the moment that aristocracy was dead and buried; but many of those who now praise it, only do so on one imperative condition, namely, that Liberty, of which Aristocracy was the companion and the guarantee, shall

be dead also, and that neither one nor the other shall ever be brought to life again. But shall we accept the funeral oration pronounced over the twin-sisters as a political gospel for the future? Must we admit with them that the sacrifice of our liberal convictions is the only security for the maintenance of modern society—that its security, its prosperity, even its existence are depending on this condition—and that to live in peace we must renounce that liberty which was the faith, and which remains, where it does remain, the sole honour of modern humanity—*et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas?*

Let us say boldly that this is not the case; it will never be so for England, never for the Anglo-Saxon race. We have for a guarantee and surety against such a calamity the great people that, sprung from the English stock, has created a new nation in the New World. One must be blind not to see the vices, the dangers, the passions which trouble and threaten the republic of the United States, to forget the inexcusable stain of slavery, and the wild attempts of the *Know-nothings*; but

one must be more than blind not to see that, notwithstanding all this, the republic of the United States has in the midst of her unlimited, her excessive liberty, all the conditions required for strength and greatness, and all the seeds of a gigantic destiny.

We find, moreover, some safeguards for England in a narrower but still an extensive sphere—in the new British colonies, and the immense development of liberty and of life that Australia, the Cape of Good Hope, and Canada present. There is no aristocracy there, no tradition, no historical *prestige*, no hereditary influence, no usages and manners superstitiously respected. There the Anglo-Saxon race has to struggle with the untried, the unknown, the infinite. It brings to this struggle only its natural gifts and the virtues acquired by a long practice of liberty, which gifts and virtues will remain with it even though the storm of victorious democracy should drive it on the dark ocean of futurity like a ship from her anchors.

In these new-born societies the Anglo-

Saxon race, the vigorous scions of the old English stock, replanted in a new soil, already shows the combination of independence and discipline, of energy and order, of enterprise and perseverance, of liberty and loyalty which characterises all the course of its European history. No serious symptom of dissatisfaction is shown towards the mother-country, which holds the reins of metropolitan authority with the most prudent moderation. Thus is verified the noble prediction of Burke, that he prematurely applied to the insurrection of the United States, but which seems to have since become the guiding principle of the colonial policy of England :—

" As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. . . . . Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil; they may have it from Spain, they may have it

from Prussia. . . . . Freedom they can have from none but you." *

In other places, and on the greatest theatre which, as yet, has been opened to the intelligence and the activity of the European races, in India, on both banks of the Ganges, we see with what splendour the genius of English colonisation shines; and for every man who loves his fellow-man, who believes in the legitimate progress of the human race, who welcomes the increasing happiness of the many, what a consoling and marvellous spectacle is that of the English Indian dominion! Its history in those regions is certainly not without stain; it required Warren Hastings' trial and the eloquence of Burke and Sheridan

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* *Speech on Conciliation with America*, March 22, 1775.—Burke's Works, iii. 124.

It is in the same speech that, to describe the pacification of Wales when England had communicated to it the benefits of her constitution, Burke made so happy an application of Horace's beautiful lines:—

"Simul alba nautis
Stella refulsit,
Defluit saxis agitatus humor,
Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes
Et minax (quod sic voluere) ponto
Unda recumbit."

to render it impossible for English governors to attempt to imitate the exactions and the oppressions of the former masters of the country.

The immoderate egotism of British commerce has imposed on the native populations, in some instances, restrictions on industry that an honest application of the principles of free trade will necessarily remove; and, in some cases, a forced cultivation, like that of opium, which is a shame to England, and a scourge to China.

But everything considered, and allowing a large amount of evil, we may boldly affirm that history gives no example of a conquest so completely turned to the good of the vanquished. Let us think of the frightful condition of those weak and industrious races exposed without defence for so many centuries to the cruelty, the rapacity, the outrages of the Moguls, the Afghans, the Mahrattas, and compare their state then with that of the one hundred and fifty millions of souls who live now in peace under the laws and the flag of England. They are governed by a handful

of foreigners—foreigners by origin, by manners, by religion, but belonging by the ties of justice and humanity to the populations that they govern, and that they have saved from the worst excesses of oppression and iniquity. These foreigners have not even feared to put arms in the hands of the Natives, for it is known that these form nine-tenths of the immense army of the East India Company. But what have they to fear? None of these Hindoos is ignorant that a king of their own country would not govern them so well, would not watch with the same solicitude over their interests, their wants, their rights. A few local or passing insurrections, like that of the Santals, make no change in this general state of affairs. For half a century the more northern provinces have alone been the seat of war; all the rest of this colossal empire has presented the aspect of an immense school, where wise and good men come from a far-distant land to implant, without violence, and by the mere expansive power of good, in the heart of the East the arts and the laws, the sincere and simple manners of

the West. Pursuing with a prudent and slow but sure progress the abolition of the sanguinary rites of idolatry,* of the immolation of widows, human sacrifices, infanticide; insuring to the Christian missionaries the freedom of truth, and substituting for the extortions of Asiatic† fiscality moderation and

* We must mention here an instance amongst a thousand of the credulity of those who allow themselves to be duped by the mystifications that the English press delights in, and by which it succeeds too often in deceiving the public of the two worlds. *Punch*, the English *Charivari*, having one day announced that a manufacturer at Birmingham had just manufactured a cargo of idols to be despatched to Hindostan, some American papers circulated the joke. From these it found its way to some French religious journals, which took it seriously; and it has been the theme of many invectives against the abominable English cupidity which makes a speculation of idolatry.

† It has been lately discovered that in several remote regions of this immense peninsula some inferior agents of the revenue department, natives by birth, and faithful to the traditions of the abominable despotism which formerly weighed so heavily on all Hindostan, have had recourse to torture to force the contributors to pay the arrears of taxes. The enemies of all liberty amongst us have immediately made this a new score of invectives against England. They have forgotten to add that, differently from the practice of their own system of government, this crime has, as soon as known, been denounced to public indignation by the thousand voices of the press; that as soon as Parliament had cognizance of the fact an inquiry was ordered, which took place immediately; that no one has attempted to defend or deny it; and that the repression of the enormity has been as prompt as sure.

It

regularity in taxes, trial by jury for arbitrary sentences, and finally, by establishing gradually the legal equality of the English and the Hindoos, and opening to the latter free access to schools, to employments, to dignities, and thus preparing the elements of a great future federation, which will probably be the cradle of an incalculable renovation of all Asia.

The only feeling of regret that a Frenchman may have at the sight of so great and so deserved a prosperity, is that France very narrowly missed the glory of civilising these countries, and that, had it not been for the miserable policy of the absolute monarchy of Louis XV. and the follies of the Revolution, the glory of Dupleix and Suffren might have eclipsed that of Clive and of Wellesley.

It may be affirmed without fear, that with a few rare exceptions, hardly perceptible in an empire of 150 millions of souls, rapine and oppression have disappeared since Warren Hastings's trial in 1784; and no traces of it are found but in the tributary principalities, and those which are *not* altogether under the dominion of the East India Company. See on this subject Lord John Russell's beautiful reflections, *Memorials and Correspondence of Fox*, p. 257.

Perhaps the foolish officialities of our administration might have deferred or complicated the work of colonisation; but, on the other hand, the sympathetic nature of the French character would have more easily won the heart of the natives, and the influence of the Catholic religion, aided by French genius, would have renewed perhaps with still greater successes the too ephemeral wonders of the Portuguese dominion in Hindostan.

Happily God has given France a magnificent indemnity in Africa, where all her military genius has been refreshed, and where the blood of her bravest children has baptized the soil as French for ever. Algeria is the best of colonies for us. Of all those that we have been invading for the last century Algeria alone remains to us, as if to prove that the only legitimate and durable conquests are those made under the reign of liberty.

But to return to India. Let it be well remembered that the initiation of the East into the civilisation of the West is the work of

the middle classes of England. The aristocracy, properly so called, has nothing to do with it. The aristocracy gives at most a few civil and military chiefs to the four Presidencies, and a few of its junior branches have inferior parts in the administration. But almost all the public functions, all the wheels of the great machinery, are in the hands of the middle class—that class which in England is on a gradual advance, and which would replace the old aristocracy, if it should be its fate to disappear. It has shown a capacity and a morality which honour it, and which form a striking contrast to the sad results of Spanish colonisation in the total destruction of the indigenous nations of America.

If, when transplanted into these distant regions, and deprived of all the conditions of success that short-sighted politicians consider as exceptional in the history of the world, this English race thus exhibits everywhere an incontestable superiority and solidity, it gives us a right to reckon on a persevering exertion of the same qualities on

their native soil, and in defence of their national existence, if it can be supposed England is predestined to anything like the same series of trials and misfortunes which have brought France into her present condition.

SECTION XV.

QUALITIES WHICH MAY GUARANTEE TO ENGLAND HER LIBERTY INDEPENDENTLY OF HER ARISTOCRACY.

OF all the qualities which constitute the social strength of this privileged race, the rarest and the most essential to the political life of a free nation is the respect for the opinions of others. From this arise the sincerity that characterises the public discussions and the guarantee of the rights of minorities, which distinguish the political acts of modern England.

It is, however, but lately, and under the beneficial pressure of her habits of discussion and of publicity, that England has arrived to this high degree of justice and of impartiality. It is therefore not an exclusive *appanage* of the Anglo-Saxon race,—it is the consequence of the laws and the liberties that that race has known how to preserve. It is

its most recently acquired virtue, but it is also the noblest and the most enviable. The majority, which has for the moment the superiority, does not make the same use of its power that it formerly did; but the minority produces and records its protestations, to prove that it has reason on its side; and to try to become in its turn the majority. Minorities, in fact, require freedom more than majorities. Under all systems, majorities are almost always sure to carry their object. Absolute power may be established by surprise, but it cannot last without the sympathy and the support of the majority of those who obey. In England the majority is for liberty, because it feels that at any moment it may become a minority in its turn; and whatever may be the transformation now in progress—whatever may be in store for this people, there is every reason to suppose that this salutary disposition will continue to animate it.

From this arises the desire of hearing and discussing all the sides of a question—of allowing freedom of speech to all interests,

to all parties, and to respect the opinions thus expressed, with a tolerance which sometimes seems to degenerate into accomplicity. This is what the English call *fair play* in their political language, impregnated as it is with the images and recollections of the pleasures of their youth.

None amongst us can forget the calm and intrepid courage displayed by Lord Aberdeen, by Sir James Graham, and Mr. Gladstone, in 1851, in defending the religious liberty of the Catholics against the *Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.* They were then running the risk of losing for ever their great political existence, so much was the popular and parliamentary passion excited by the re-establishment of the episcopal hierarchy; nevertheless, a year later they were all three called to fill the most important situations in the coalition ministry.

Whoever has heard Mr. Gladstone's memorable speech against the prolongation of the war, on the 24th of May last, might have believed that the majority, or at least a very considerable portion of the members of the

House of Commons was of his opinion—so great was the attention—so profound the silence with which he was heard; yet there were no more than thirty members out of five hundred who agreed with him; and public opinion, as well as the whole press, were unanimous against his conclusions. It was the same when Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright explained their theory about peace. We have seen the much lamented Mr. Lucas, although doubly unpopular in the House, both as a convert to Catholicism, and as the representative of the warmest opinions of the *Irish party*, make himself heard with respect and attention.*

Those who have seen *our* political assemblies, more especially those who have had to struggle against the excessive or simultaneous intolerance of the majorities and the

* In the affair of the Madiai (15th May, 1851) he had the honour to discomfit Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, not in vindicating for the Catholic governments the rights and the privileges of persecuting error, but in giving a picture of the persecution and the violences perpetrated by the Protestant governments, encouraged by these two noble lords. Even the *Times* has done justice to the superiority of Mr. Lucas.

the representative system, well understood and applied, is the most important of all the distinctions of the Anglo-Saxon race. There no one thinks of requiring the Government to do all, to foresee all, to know all, to decide all, and of then repaying it with utter oblivion, or still more odious ingratitude, as soon as fortune ceases to favour it. There no Government has, as yet, ventured to substitute itself for the collective or individual action of its citizens, to compress everywhere the spontaneous strength, the responsible will of the community, to reduce and subject everything to its sole initiation, correction, authorisation, intervention, and personal interest. Far from giving way to these tendencies, to the universal encroachment which forms the apparent strength but the real weakness of all the rulers to whom France has had successively to submit, the English Government is extremely reluctant to meddle with what does not exclusively belong to the domain of politics properly so called. It is often pushed into this path by the Democrats and Radicals,

minorities, are better able to appreciate the benefits of such proceedings.

This is because the English people, who have an instinctive admiration of civil courage, recognises and admires that virtue in any man who dares to resist, even when alone, the ascendency of popular ideas, and the current of public opinion. Even when his passions and prejudices are the most directly contradicted, an Englishman is satisfied with the weakness and the want of power of his opponents; and far from stopping their mouths, he feels that the resolution and the tenacity of such energetic adversaries are an additional glory and strength to the national character. It seems, in truth, as if there is nothing more anti-democratic than these individual resistances to the will of the mass. There are no more traces of it in the republic of the United States than in the absolute monarchies of Europe. In the democracies, the boldness of him who opposes the general opinion, is considered as an offence against equality—as the *ne plus ultra* of the abuse of privilege. It is, in fact, the height of aris-

tocracy to dare so to hold out against the idol of the day, to strive against the precipitous torrent, and to stand alone and erect, when all are bowing down, hiding their obsequious—their cowardly heads. But nothing prevents this energy of an invincible conscience from displaying itself in a Christian and sincerely liberal democracy. Besides, it is such a general and deep-rooted habit in the English, so identical with the traditions of their general and local life, that, according to all probabilities, it will, to the honour of the English race, survive any revolution, and will co-exist with all the new forms of political life.

This spirit of justice and sincerity, of which the English are proud in their political system at home, produces another effect, which is not without its importance.

It has been said, with too much reason, that in France popularities are fugacious, and unpopularities implacable. Such is not the case on the other side of the Channel. Popularity is there as it is everywhere, ephemeral and volatile; but nobody is condemned to a

perpetual unpopularity. Men have been seen who, after having been unpopular for many years, have conquered in one day general esteem and public admiration. A gallant action in time of war—a clever or opportune speech—an act of courage, of charity, have restored to many persons whose names might be mentioned, a position which appeared irrevocably compromised or lost.

This is a great encouragement to patience and perseverance, those two indispensable qualities for any political career. From this also, and from many other causes, arises the superior class of public men. Yes, although the golden age of parliamentary eloquence may be gone by—although the cycle of the great ministers, as well as that of the great orators, seems to be closed, English liberty has still an inexhaustible treasure in the character of its public men. They have undoubtedly prejudices, passions, numberless infirmities. They may be accused of narrow and exclusive views, of national, unbounded egotism, of pride obstinately blind, and of inconsistencies often ridiculous. All that is

true; but what will never be seen amongst them is, that cynicism of apostacy, that abject worship of brute force, that obsequious adoration of success, that almost universal prostration of men's minds, which have but too often dishonoured our contemporaneous history.

We do not deny that there may be in England some cases of apostacy and of corruption: we deny their having been accepted and condoned by public opinion. Placed under the fire of an implacable publicity, brought up in the traditions of political honour, which renders baseness as impossible to the public man as cowardice to the soldier, the Englishman who feels in himself some low propensities, who meditates a sacrifice to fear or to lucre, of the convictions of his conscience and the antecedents of his life, makes up his mind to the event; he knows that he cannot parade his shame in the eyes of his fellow-citizens; he retires into some obscure, but lucrative corner of Government patronage, and is forgotten. There is not an example, now-a-days, in England,

of a man having increased by apostacy, or of having governed his country in making the sacrifice of his honour and morality to his ambition.*

Here we must make an essential remark. In the Continental nations the feeling of honour, political and social, had its home and safeguard in the aristocratic spirit of the court, the army, and society in general. Now in the universal ruin of all aristocratic ideas and institutions, this flower, so liable to fade, is exposed without shelter to the mortal breath, becoming every day more and more irresistible, of personal and pecuniary interest. And thus it is that in the countries where the secrecy of the *Tribune* and of the press guarantees impunity to the weaknesses and apostacy of public men, the sentiment of honour becomes a superannuated myth. On the contrary, wherever the parliamentary system exists, it creates again the reign of political delicacy; it exercises its dominion under a form often harsh

* "What is to be feared is not so much the immorality of the great as the immorality leading to greatness."—Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, vol. ii. chap. v.

and undefined, but with an efficacious severity. The exaggerated but salutary susceptibilities of public opinion, constantly kept alive by the press, restrain in the heads of ambitious men, if not all, at least most, of the baser tendencies of human nature. Probity, faithful performance of engagements, disinterestedness, become the first conditions of a public man's success, and, thanks to this moral restraint, without which there is no virtue either private or public, honour resumes its influence.

If from individualities we come down to the masses—if we seek to recognise or to search the distinctive features of the English people in its political aspect, we shall find that the characteristic virtue of English society is effort—personal, prolonged, energetic, and spontaneous effort.

We all know that effort is the first condition of merit and of virtue in temporal as well as spiritual concerns; the system which most promotes effort is, then, that which most contributes to the morality as well as to the honour of a nation. It is in this view that

and by the superannuated blindness of some Liberals; but it proceeds in it with very reluctant and dilatory steps.

Public opinion agrees with historical tradition in imposing on every English subject the right and the duty of working and caring for the general interest. At the great demonstration for administrative reform which took place at Drury Lane, on the 13th of June last, the president of the meeting pronounced "the public business of England is the private business of every Englishman." There is nothing new in this. When we look sixty years back, at the time of the explosion of the revolutionary doctrines in England, we find this passage in a letter of Lord Grenville, Secretary of State, and one of Pitt's colleagues :—

"The hands of Government must be strengthened, if the country is to be saved; but, above all, the work must not be left to the hands of Government, but every man must put his shoulder to it, according to his rank and situation in life, or it will not be

done. . . . . Our laws suppose magistrates and grand juries to do this duty, and if they do it not, I have little faith in its being done by a Government such as the constitution has made ours."*

This concourse of all to the common work is not only the basis of political life, but it is the fundamental basis of all social organisation. Labour, struggle, independent and spontaneous activity are visible everywhere. From this there necessarily results at first sight an appearance of confusion and of disorder which strikes with astonishment those who come from countries where everything is arranged, classed, and ticketed according to the rules of that tiresome uniformity and minute solicitude of the public authorities which, while it saves men trouble by releasing them from all responsibility, destroys the principle of self-action—extinguishes zeal and enterprise—enervates the existing race of men, and condemns them to, as it were, a

* Lord Grenville's Letter to the Marquis of Buckingham, 14th November, 1792.

perpetual minority. Thus they can discover no other mode of emancipating themselves from the wardship of a Master than the throwing themselves into the wildest excesses of anarchy, and when they have got into that deplorable state, stunned, bewildered, exhausted, and terrified by that short and violent paroxysm, they become an easy prey to the first adventurer that presents himself, who audaciously puts on their necks the yoke they had just shaken off, to which they tamely submit *en attendant* that the demagogy should recover strength and courage to recommence its attack, and then it will find men without energy, without manliness, and, as it were, asleep in a chronic lethargy.

To the English these alternations of violence and exhaustion are unknown. They are always awake and stirring, and what a superabundance of energy, of activity, of intelligence, and of productive strength do we see in all the directions of social, of political and industrial life! Under those unquiet and complicated appearances there is a real stability and regularity; order is everywhere

maintained, everybody finds himself at last in his proper place, and employs himself in doing his own business.

The first interests of all civilised nations—Education, Charity, and Justice—take root and life in the inexhaustible reservoir of the independent spirit and spontaneous activity of twenty millions of Christian souls.

The Englishman gives his money, his time, his name to a work of charity, or of public interest; he makes it his glory that the work thus promoted should be equal to the wants, and in accordance with the progress, of general society; but to accomplish this, he never thinks of asking or of accepting the helping hand of the Government for that which he and his fathers have founded. He keeps his authority over these institutions, with the responsibility of them—his rights with his duties. He would faint at the sight of our cut-and-dry system of legal charity, directed, superintended, restricted, in fact *pinioned* and *gagged*, in which, since 1852, the members of the *Bureaux de Bienfaisance* through France are placed and displaced by the Préfets, as

are also all the administrators of hospitals, who formerly were *elected.*

"*Supported by voluntary contributions*"—such is the proud and noble inscription that we read on most of the numerous hospitals and asylums which England provides for sickness, poverty, and misery. Even when the English Government has taken the initiative, the public always follows to take its ample share in the good work. "*Condidit Rex, Civium largitas perfecit,*" as it is written in the front of the immense hospital of Bedlam. It is well understood that these words, "*Supported by voluntary subscriptions,*" imply also "*governed by the authority of the subscribers.*" It is the same principle everywhere—effort, personal and permanent sacrifices, and then the rights and the power arising from the sacrifice and the effort. As long as this principle shall remain in reverence and practice, England has nothing to fear; her glory and her virtue will assuredly survive the contagion of Continental servitude.

It is thus that England escapes the greatest difficulty and the greatest danger of modern

society—the oppressive social uniformity of a despotic Government. There the variety of rights and the infinite diversity of individual opinions would strangle in its birth that fatal uniformity which is with us the offspring of *bureaucracy*—the mark and condition of servitude, and which, very far from being a guarantee of stability to nations or governments, has never saved these from the most sudden and most shameful overthrows. Still less has England known that detestable abuse of force created by the omnipotence of our modern Governments, whatever may be their origin or their name—*Dictator* or *Assembly*, *Monarchy* or *Republic*.

In the nations of this age a revolution or a conspiracy easily overthrows a Government, but it is too often only to substitute for the fallen power a new one, which is found to be quite as impatient of restraint as its predecessor was, and which arrogates to itself the right and the power of doing whatever it pleases, and succeeds for a time—so much have the most useful inventions of civilisation, and the happy gentleness of modern manners,

simplified the formerly laborious and hazardous task of despotism!

England, where all material improvements have found either their origin or their development, where philanthropy and *comfort* engage more of men's thoughts than anywhere else,—England, I say, has not yet known the humiliation of such mobility of opinions and of such a ready and universal submission to power. The ease and luxury of civil life have no more enervated their institutions than their characters. There nobody is all-powerful—neither the King, nor the law, nor the Lords, nor the mob. All that attempts to triumph and to dominate meets a barrier at every step. It may be a corporation, or an individual; it may be a written record, or a new custom; perhaps a remembrance, perhaps a prejudice; but there is always a something to oppose encroachment and usurpation, and that *something* always finds auxiliaries in bodies of men or individuals trained to independence, accustomed to resistance, and always ready to act in concert for the common cause. We may be sure

that oppression, whether imposed by law or exerted by power, will never reach the proportion that it takes in those countries where, all the citizens being reduced to an equal state of insignificance, there remains neither the will nor the means of organising any solid resistance even to the worst and most despotic measures.

SECTION XVI.

PUBLICITY IN ENGLAND.

TALKING of the institutions and traditions of England, of those that we may not only envy, but might borrow for the benefit of our democratic society, if we inquire closely what is the principal instrument of that social mechanism, at once so complicated and so substantial, and which guarantees the enjoyment of all those benefits—old or new—I am inclined to think that that instrument is *publicity*. Publicity in England is at once immense, complete, and sincere. It has not been always thus,* but it is so now. Such a publicity cannot exist, of course, without the liberty of the press; but the liberty of the press is not sufficient to secure it. We know it by experience.

* We see in Wilberforce's correspondence, that in the last years of the eighteenth century he had to complain of the alterations in his speeches by the newspapers of his opponents.

We have had the liberty of the press, but we never have had publicity.

In modern society, he who has publicity has everything. When the Venetian ambassador wished to give his republic a complete idea of the power of Cromwell in 1656, he wrote :—"That man has turned out the House of Commons: *il* PARLE *et il* MENT *tout seul*—he speaks and he lies alone."*

In England, at present, publicity is really and sincerely the property of the public. In fact and in right the liberty of the press is unlimited; but it might be subjected to all the usefully restrictive measures which existed under our parliamentary government, without producing any alteration in the sincerity and the frankness of the British press. English publicity is neither imposed, nor guaranteed, nor restrained by law. It is in the manners and in the public spirit of the nation. It arises out of a long practice of liberty. It has become the first necessity and the most impe-

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* Sagredo's despatch, mentioned by M. Guizot (Histoire de la République d'Angleterre et de Cromwell, vol. ii. p. 240).

rious habit of the country. Do not expect from the English journalist either justice or moderation in his judgments;—no—but you will at least have the detailed and faithful account of the facts that he appreciates; the exact reproduction of the words spoken or written that he censures will always appear unmutilated in his columns by the side of his own articles, and the fair balance of truth is re-established.

Let us take two examples where the contrast between France and England is the most striking. The reporting of parliamentary debates, when it was free with us, was liable to the most important mutilations and alterations, according to the opinions or the passions of the journalist, though he pretended that he was giving his readers an exact account of the debate. I know of none but the *Journal des Débats* which made an honourable exception to this rule. Who does not remember how the *National* used to season the speeches of its adversaries with imaginary interruptions and insults, forged in its own office? These shameful tricks are unknown

to the English press. Whether you take up a Liberal or a Conservative paper, you will almost always find a faithful report of the adverse arguments, and a fair account of the incidents of the most exciting debate. The *reporters* sometimes embellish the style of the speeches, but they would disdain to add or to retrench an essential word or idea.

This severe probity, this admirable good faith is all the more meritorious and salutary because there never has been an official report of parliamentary discussions, nor any other means of rectifying or identifying the terms employed by the speakers, than an individual protest, addressed to the journals complained of; and these protests are rarely resorted to.

The right of reply is not guaranteed in England by law, but it is always exercised with a scrupulous good faith. It has required more than one legislative disposition, and innumerable judicial contestations, to insure its admittance among us. And God knows what difficulties, what squabbles, what miserable and fatiguing contestations it entails

when we are reduced to make use of it. It has been said with truth, the press with us is in a state that would better suit Barbary Powers,

No one is ignorant of the mischief done by journalism to free institutions. It is so great that Liberty is almost reduced to say to the Press—*Nec tecum, nec te sine, vivere possum.* But it has not been sufficiently observed that its greatest abuses have survived the ruin of all our other safeguards. Since journalism has been itself shackled and relieved from the salutary counteraction of the *Tribune*, it has become more formidable than ever. The thousands of subscribers to our newspapers have never been more servilely tied to the wheels of their Master's car; their ears and their understandings have never been more hermetically sealed to every sound but that of the one great bell which deafens them every morning for the rest of the day. The man who is not chained to one of the two or three predominant opinions has never had less chance than now of protesting against falsehood or obtaining reparation for calumny; too happy

is he if his adversaries do not contrive to drag him into some snare or ambush, where they well know they will meet a third and all powerful party, who will speedily undertake to silence their victim.

In England it is altogether different—the public looks upon itself as a permanent jury; it must hear the *pro* and *con*. Every individual attacked or designated in a newspaper becomes immediately a party concerned in a trial—he uses and abuses the full freedom of defence. The newspaper is obliged out of respect to public opinion to take or to affect to take something of that impartial position which Anglo-Saxon equity imposes on the judges of the land, and which prohibits any attempt to browbeat or entrap a person on trial. Injustice, no doubt, often prevails; evil triumphs there as elsewhere; but its victory, always contested, is never complete, never definitive. Every complaint finds an echo, every right a champion, every effort a fair field!

Moreover, and above all dispute or personal prejudice, public interests as well as private

rights find the most efficacious safeguard in that universal and unlimited publicity.

It is first the only effective mode of exerting the control of public opinion; of rendering a traffic of consciences impossible; of repressing some excesses of iniquity, of corruption, and of baseness, which would escape every other correction.

The blaze of daily discussion throws a light, not only on the surface of contested questions, but penetrates into the most obscure corners of prejudice and falsehood.

In process of time abuse or injustice must yield to the energetic and reiterated remonstrances of the injured parties, or of honest and disinterested spectators. The resistance may be more or less long, the reparation more or less gradual; but the final result of all the discussions which have been for more than a century tried in the High Court of English Publicity, has always been favourable to liberty, to justice, and to humanity.

I except, as I have done before, from this favourable judgment all that relates to the exterior policy of England, and to her rela-

tions with foreign States. Here the political, religious, and national partiality which disappears in the prolonged conflict of adverse parties in her interior discussions resumes all its force and all its fraud. But this might be considered as an exception that confirms the rule. The foreign parties, the principles, the States which have had the misfortune or the honour to attract the hostility or antagonism of the majority of the English people, are never represented in the English press. They are never permitted to enter into those prolonged polemics from which on other topics sparks of truth and justice are always sure to be elicited.

On all questions of foreign policy the British public is easily made to believe quite as much nonsense, quite as many lies as our restricted publicity imposes on us on the questions which touch us more nearly.

The great English newspapers keep up, at a vast expense, in foreign capitals, correspondents, who are instructed to falsify and contradict facts and rights to whatever extent may be necessary to flatter and forward

British prejudices and interests; and they fulfil their task with complete success.

Adulation becomes then as brutal as insult. The following fact will show that I cannot be justly accused of a blind *Anglomanie*. The question is the happy alliance between France and England, now sanctioned by victory, but which had been prepared, prophesied, praised, and popularised first by Madame de Staël, and since by all liberal statesmen in France. The English press, in order to pay its homage to this new friendship, fancies itself at liberty to forget or deny all the surprising improvements in religion, in public and private charities, in civil liberty—the admirable results obtained by the genius of France in letters, in arts, in historical science, in the repression of crime, in industry, and, in short, in all the various elements of public or private life during thirty-seven years of our political liberty. In the face of the contrast offered by the religious, intellectual, and social state of France in 1850 to that of France in 1812, I know but one French newspaper which would dare to say what an Englishman said in

the *Times* of the 12th of November last — that "he regretted that the Napoleonian era should have been interrupted by the *dark episode of the Restoration, and the corrupt intermedium of the Orleanist system.*"

Such are the abuses which may accompany the most precious of rights; such is the toll that passion and falsehood require from truth to allow it a free passage. We must not, however, allow the wounds inflicted by English publicity on our creeds and affections to make us as unjust to it as it is to us, and deny that, on the whole, the good infinitely surpasses the evil. Let us record the consolatory fact that religion and morals, which might be expected to run the greatest risks from an indefinite publicity, come triumphant out of that formidable trial.

It is incontestable that the Catholic cause in particular has made a progress exactly proportioned to the development of the liberty of speech and of the press.

The explosion of pride and anger which burst from the press against the re-establishment of the Catholic episcopal hierarchy has

produced none of the consequences which might have been anticipated.. Among the Protestants the general tone of literature, periodical or not, is assuredly more Christian, more moral, more chaste, than it was a hundred years ago, before the degree of extension which publicity has now acquired. It may be affirmed that there is no country in the world where the press, however shackled or gagged, produces fewer offences against piety or morals; where the newspapers preserve more respect and decency towards the religion of the country. I am told that in the lowest grade of English society there is a number of licentious and impious writings in circulation. It is possible; but I affirm that these are not met with in any place where an honest man, very curious and not over scrupulous, may carry his investigations. I affirm that in no public place frequented by respectable persons, in no publication circulated amongst them, is there anything offensive to religion and morality which at all approaches to what is now distributed in France at fifty thousand copies a day, under

that legislation which interdicts with an indefatigable vigilance the slightest criticism of its official acts.

What are we to conclude from this?—That all errors must be equally repressed and compressed? That is simply impossible. The most absolute powers would attempt it in vain, and the control that they do exercise perhaps increases the mischief. They repress political discussion; but political agitations seem in some degree to compensate for their notorious calamities by diverting depraved minds and vitiated tastes into revolts more flagrant but less guilty than those against the laws of decency, morality, and religion. It is remarkable that during the stormy and dangerous interval from 1848 to 1851, even the most reckless of our journals diminished something of their rancour against morals and against Christianity. It is no longer so; and it is a matter more of regret than wonder. Restraint can never be so severe and absolute that the evil does not find some compensatory mode of issue.

It remains to be seen whether the remedy

has been opportunely or sagaciously applied. Discussion and criticism have been prohibited where they would have produced little or no inconvenience, but they have been permitted when directed against the most sacred subjects. The Fathers of the late Council of the province of Bordeaux, held at La Rochelle, seem to believe that such was the case, for we read in their synodical letter of July, 1855, this remarkable passage :—

"If in these latter times the freedom of discussion has been restricted as to the powers of this world, does it not seem as if there had resulted a greater intensity of outrage against the Divine majesty?"

SECTION XVII.

ENGLAND AND SPAIN.

A PRACTICAL contrast will perhaps have more effect on some of my readers than the arguments with which I have tried to establish the intrinsic superiority of a political system founded on principles of liberty.

Let us take a point of comparison in history which is clear of all theoretic prejudice, and of all national partiality. Let us put France aside, and compare England and Spain, such as they were after the Middle Ages and before the Reformation—the one under Henry VII., the other under Charles V.—and let us then see their present condition.

In 1510, England—exhausted by the War of the Roses, stripped of her possessions in France, not yet united with Scotland, not yet enriched by colonies, not yet protected by a naval superiority — is hardly reckoned

amongst the important powers of Europe. In 1510, Spain—delivered, after seven centuries of struggles unparalleled in history, from the yoke of the Moors, constituted as a nation by Ferdinand and Isabella, mistress of a new world through Christopher Columbus, mistress of the Low Countries and of half of Italy—towers above all other Christian kingdoms. Ximenes governs her, St. Theresa is about to be born, Gonsalvo of Cordova fights her battles. She is on the verge of universal empire.

Three centuries after, where are they?

In 1800, England—after her revolutions, her civil wars, her formidable struggle against the French Revolution—disputes with France the first place in the affairs of the world. She has no rival on the sea. She is the queen of commerce and of industry. She puts one foot on Gibraltar, the other on Malta. She has founded one empire in Asia, and in America another, which may one day eclipse her. She has advanced from greatness to greatness. She has produced in all the ranges of thought geniuses which have no superiors.

Lastly, she is governed, as were Athens and Rome in their best days, by a race of men whose political wisdom is illustrated by incomparable eloquence.

In 1800, Spain—notwithstanding the virtues of her heroic population, so sober, so patient, so generous, so pious, so superior on all these points to the English race—Spain, preserved by her religious unity from an abundant source of discord and misfortune —Spain is nothing! All is gone,—institutions, politics, civil guarantees, riches, credit, influence, navy, army, commerce, industry, science, literature—all have simultaneously vanished. From fall to fall, from despot to despot, from favourite to favourite, she has become nothing better than the prey of a Godoy.

PITT and GODOY: these two names sum up and explain the destinies and the differences of these two great Christian nations at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

On the one hand life! on the other death!

How can we explain such a difference?

Protestants, and all those who look on

Luther's Reformation as an era of progress, have a ready answer: Protestantism makes England's greatness; . Catholicism· causes Spain's decline.

To every Catholic worthy of that name, such an explanation is blasphemy.

But we must account for so striking a contrast. And how can we do it but in acknowledging that political liberty has alone been able to give to England her prodigious strength, and that despotism has in Spain infected, confiscated, destroyed the most precious gifts that God ever gave a nation here below?

Our faith agrees thus with reason, with experience, with historical evidence; for once more that liberty which is the glory and the strength of England is but the beneficial legacy constantly ameliorated of Catholic centuries. Spain, with her Cortes, her *Fueros*, her municipalities, had fully possessed it: she found in it strength to vanquish and to expel the Moors, and the right to walk at the head of Christianity, till the fatal omnipotence and the stupid egotism of her kings con-

demned her to this rapid declension into insignificance. But when her last light was flickering, almost extinguished—when the iron hand of Napoleon placed on that dishonoured throne one of his family—that chivalrous nation resumes, by a sublime effort, a national attitude, and becomes her own mistress, and worthy of her ancestors. With the help of her old enemy, England, she, in her turn, breaks down the fragile fortunes of the conqueror of Europe. Political liberty plants its flag by the side of that of national independence on the impregnable walls of Cadiz, and, notwithstanding mistakes, follies, excesses, and even crimes, that must follow the new birth of a people so long misruled and misunderstood, her trial has been shorter and less shameful than that which degraded her from the hands of Isabella the Catholic to those of Godoy.

SECTION XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

IT requires courage, I repeat, to do justice to England in our days, and to remain faithful to that admiration which the *Liberals* used to profess for her. In all that concerns her relations with foreign nations, her fickleness, her ingratitude, her strange enthusiasms, the harshness of her egotism, the abuse of her own strength, her odious usurpations on the weakness of others, her absolute contempt for justice when justice does not offer some interest to serve or some power which she is forced to respect,—all this is more than enough to excite against her the indignation of every upright and generous mind.* But, once more,

* We may be allowed to reproduce here what we said before the revolution of February, on the contrast between the foreign policy of France and England:—

"We also have some dismal pages in our history, but I know nothing which resembles this odious tactic. We have imposed the

it is not her foreign policy, nor her alliances, nor her aggressions that I have attempted to examine, much less to defend or to praise.

There we have nothing to learn, nothing to admire.

But it is very different with her internal life and her social and political organisation. There all is worthy of study, and almost all worthy of envy. Thanks to institutions created in the middle ages, and that she alone in Europe has known how to preserve and bring to perfection. She alone also has been able to escape autocracy and anarchy, whilst all the nations of the Continent have fallen

yoke of despotism upon foreign nations, but we began by undergoing it and liking it ourselves. We have even carried anarchy and devastation at the points of our bayonets into many countries, but we began with being intoxicated ourselves by that delirium we were propagating abroad. What we have never done is to keep for ourselves the benefits of order, of justice, and of liberty of social hierarchy, while we went abroad for hire to foment and to patronise disorder or tyranny. No, thank heaven! France has not to reproach herself with that blindness and egotism. My heart gladly pays her that homage, not in a narrow spirit of exclusive patriotism that I have always reproved, but in obedience to the feeling of morality, the feeling of outraged justice, which at last burst into light, and which forces from me this cry of an indignation too long suppressed."—Speech of the 14th January, 1848, in the House of Peers, on the affairs of Switzerland.

victims to one or the other, and sometimes to both. Will she be able to maintain that glorious privilege in the crisis she is going through now? Will she still remain the inviolate asylum of liberty and of political good sense? *That is the question!* I have not hesitated to answer it in the affirmative, because I have not yet discovered any essential attempt against the principles, the habits, and the rules which have hitherto been her greatness and her liberty. Notwithstanding all the alarming symptoms I have mentioned, the defection of too great a number of statesmen and of writers, who already lend a hand to the enemy, I hope she will not repudiate her past history. No; that nation which has resisted Cromwell, and which has triumphed over Napoleon, will never be so weary of self-government as to abdicate her liberty, her conscience, and her honour into the hands of any man, however great, that the future can have in store for them. She will not substitute the silent reign of autocracy for the fruitful agitation of liberty, nor the stagnant vegetation of satisfied appetites for the strug-

gles and salutary perils of a people who can walk alone.

She will not give that satisfaction to the apostles of the new era, nor that lesson of despair to future generations. She will not accept equality in servitude in lieu of individual liberty. She will not sacrifice to a dream of envious levelling or a sickly longing after peace and security the independence, the dignity, the spontaneity of her noble nature. No; in spite of many unfavourable symptoms that present themselves, England will never listen to the voice of those false prophets who teach nations to seek in their own humiliation a shelter against their own extravagance, to seek in silence an alleviation of their remorse, and to abdicate into the hands of an autocrat their honour, their conscience, and their responsibility. No; England will never understand or practise that new doctrine, which presents to the world, as an ideal of the past and of the future, a system where none can move but in fetters—none rise but by crawling—where talent, virtue, thought, courage, count for

nothing unless they wear the livery of the government.

In England, on the contrary, it is government that wears the livery of the People—the freedom of thought, of opinion, of party, the legitimate exercise and expression of which constitute the life and the rights of a free people. The individual value of men is not yet crushed under the heavy and implacable level of masses of electors careless in their choice, and incompetent to judge. The sight of such a country is a repose to the eye fatigued at seeing all around the miserable triumphs of force legitimised by the blind miscalculation of Conservatives, by divisions not less blind of the Liberals, and by the cynical equality of the Democrats. In England, at least, every honest and generous heart has the consolation of belonging to a state of society founded on principles which uphold the dignity of our nature whilst they admit its incurable frailty and weaknesses.

But that consolation would not be of long duration if England did not submit, in a just measure, to the transformations indis-

pensable to the invincible march of time and of modern civilisation. She is now engaged in that great enterprise from which she will come out with honour if she remains faithful to the lessons of her own history. Her powerful and intelligent aristocracy, unceasingly recruited by the most active elements of social life, will lead the way in this work, and identify itself with it.

When, long ago, emerging from the middle age, the use of the cannon and the formation of permanent and plebeian armies took from the nobility its exclusive military duties, the English Aristocracy alone in Europe discovered and understood the civil and political mission which presented itself to them. Alone in Europe, it saved from the wreck of the institutions which had been common to all Christianity for five centuries all that was deserving of being saved. Alone it kept its rank at the head of the nation, and succeeded in doing so by bringing to the public defence and the exercise of public liberties its fortune, its influence, and its ancestral spirit of order and of perseverance.

And now, again, it will see that society expects from it an analogous transformation, less exclusive, no doubt, but not less laborious nor less beneficial. The task of the old school politic is finished. The old parties are worn out. Whigs and Tories have had their day. It would be in vain to attempt to galvanise these corpses. New interests and new problems have arisen. The great questions of humanity, of charity, of labour, of justice, are set to us by the hand of God; they await from the intelligence and the devotion of the superior classes the solutions which already occupy all young, sagacious, and generous minds.

The attentive study and sincere practice of the duties enjoined by property; the extension of all the benefits of ancient order to the populations newly created by industry; the conciliation of their imperious and legitimate exigencies with the maintenance of the guarantees of liberty and intelligence; such is the task of those who have received from their fathers the magnificent inheritance of a constitution which supplies human activity

with the most energetic and most flexible instruments which it has ever been given to man to consecrate to his own good and to that of others. They will know how to make use of these instruments to keep this great people from that fatal declivity down which all other European nations are rapidly falling from a pretended equality to real servitude.

If I am to believe all that I have seen and heard, English society will not be found unequal to this task. Future historians will be still able to felicitate England for having had "at all times the most democratic aristocracy and the most aristocratic democracy that the world has ever known;"* and if another Louis XI. should triumph on the Continent, another Comines may repeat the testimony that great politician gave four hundred years ago:—"According to my opinion, in all the lordships of the world that I know, England is the one where public affairs are better managed, and where there is less violence on the people."†

* Macaulay.

† Speaking of the restraint on the King of England, of not

I anticipate another objection. I hear everywhere that the liberty and the prosperity of England are owing to the peculiar character of her people, and that institutions analogous to hers cannot succeed but in a race endowed like hers with certain virtues which are not easily defined, but which every one agrees in saying are wanting in every other nation. I hold this opinion to be diametrically contrary to the evidence of history.

The institutions of England have nothing special in themselves. They are but an intelligent and progressive development of those enjoyed by all Europe during the middle ages—except the Byzantine Empire, always infected with the irremediable corruption of Cæsarism. They were all grafted by Christianity on the German stock from which we have all issued in different degrees. The English race has no greater admirer than I am; but I do not know that it has a single virtue which was not given to all Christian

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undertaking anything without the consent of his Parliament, Comines adds: "Which is a very just and holy thing, and by which the kings are all the stronger and the better served."

races, and that each of those races has displayed in certain favourable circumstances. If we have all possessed in former times the institutions which make the strength and the glory of England, there is nothing in the nature of things to prevent our recovering and establishing for the future those which are the elements of the greatness of England.

All nations are made to be improved—elevated. Representative government is no doubt a long, laborious, and difficult education, but it is the most honourable and fruitful of all. The example of a nation which has gone through the despotism of the Tudors, which has survived the frauds and the corruption of the Stuarts, and submitted to the rude hand of Cromwell, to reach the station where it stands, has nothing which need make other nations despair or even doubt while their apprenticeship is still going on. The *reign of Terror* has stained our history with some pages more bloody than the history of England, but she has none more shameful. I know nothing in the annals of any modern people which equals the political degradation

of England under the despotism of Henry VIII., without honour at home and without glory abroad;—nothing which surpasses the baseness of parties under Charles II., when the most enlightened men were the accomplices or the dupes of such a sanguinary impostor as Titus Oates, when both government and opposition were competitors for the bribes so infamously systematized as to have become *salaries* from Louis XIV., the most formidable enemy of their country.

Such disgraceful facts will not allow us to believe that the nation which bore them can be endued with any superior virtues. That nation has, however, risen in her strength and in her liberty; and for nearly two centuries she has been working her way to the first rank in modern society. But how and why? Because her institutions, carefully preserved and perfected by a long experience, afforded her legal and natural means of repairing her errors and recovering her dignity; because English Kings have fortunately had neither the power nor opportunity of absorbing the life of the

nation into their own authority; because the tutelary forms and fundamental principles of parliamentary government survived all storms, and opened to the successors of those servile and venal assemblies the way to a prompt and complete rehabilitation. It is through these efforts—these struggles—by the perpetual gymnastics of political life, and solely through them, that the national character has become gradually purified, elevated, and strengthened.

The institutions of England have not been founded by its public spirit—it is they that have created, maintained, and often saved from suicide that public spirit which, much as we may admire, it would be still better if we could imitate.

It is but little more than a century that modern England has enjoyed that plenitude of liberty which her constitution was preparing for her. Through what bloody struggles, through what long eclipses, through what cruel trials and hazards, has she not had to pass before arriving to that full and peaceful possession of herself! How often

from the reign of King John to that of George II, has the honest and patriotic Englishman not had to doubt of the future destinies of his country, of the triumph of right, and of the maintenance of his dearest liberties! Those who have persevered—who have trusted—who have hoped against hope, have been finally successful; but it has been only by courage, by patience, by a robust faith in the good cause and in good sense, that they have been finally rewarded by the possession and enjoyment of that constitution which has cost them so dear, but which is worth all its cost, and which has won for them the admiration of the most elevated minds, from Montesquieu to the Comte de Maistre.

Such is the conclusion and encouraging lesson which English society offers to those who might feel their faith in liberty and their confidence in a limited government shaken by recent events in France. Such also is the consolation it offers to those who prefer the proud and patient resignation of a defeat to a dishonourable accomplicity in the

triumph of what they have all their life long either fought against or despised.

Enlightened by such great examples, let us accept the passing humiliation under which Liberty now lies as a deserved chastisement for the ingratitude, the folly, the spirit of discord and disorder by which we have so cruelly abused its first benefits. But let us continue to believe in it, and let us endeavour by the trials that we suffer to acquire for us and our posterity the merits in which we have heretofore failed. We are walking indeed in darkness, but still in a road that we know—which we have seen by daylight, and which on the return of daylight we shall recognise again. Eclipses surprise children only, and frighten none but savages. Let us pass through these dark intervals with unbent heads and tranquil hearts. Let us endure with that "sad and intrepid aspect" that Bossuet describes the fickleness and the insults of adverse fortune,—

"Donec fortunam criminis pudeat sui."—*Phæd.*

Let us resist scepticism as well as fanaticism, and hold out against those who profess in-

difference in politics, as well as those who would proscribe all safeguards and all independence. Next to our faith in Divine truth and Infallible Authority, let us also keep our faith in the noble instincts of our youth—in those principles of liberty, of justice, and of honour which alone constitute here below the strength and the dignity of the humblest individual, as of the greatest nations. In the midst of the discouragements, the hesitations, and the apostacies which surround us, let at least our voices and our lives remain faithful to our past—*Manet immota fides.*

THE END.

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